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FOR MOLLIE.

BY LILLIE E. BARR.

I.
I keep for you the brightest hope
  That sweetens all my life—
The hope that builds the happy home
  Where you shall reign my wife!
And if you share my hope, Mollie,
  Then, darling, we shall see,
That our hoping is not folly,
  But sweet reality.

II.
For you I keep the kindest words
  That lips have learnt to say,
And with your name, in all my thoughts
  I link them every day.
Oh, will you share them Mollie, dear,
  And speak them back again?
Then all their sweetness will be clear,
  Their loving meaning plain.

III.
For you I keep the gladdest song—
  The song of all the best;
The song of love the robins sing
  Above their happy nest.
Oh, listen, Mollie, to my rhyme,
  And sing the song with me,
Until we keep the perfect time
  Of its sweet melody.

IV.
And with all take the truest heart
  That beats in mortal breast;
For if you take it, then I know
  You will take all the rest.
You'll take my hopes and words, Mollie,
  The happy song I sing;
You'll take my heart and hand, Mollie,
  And Love's gold wedding ring.

THE CROSS OF NINONDALE.

A STORY OF THE CIVIL WAR.

By SYLVANUS COBB, Jr.

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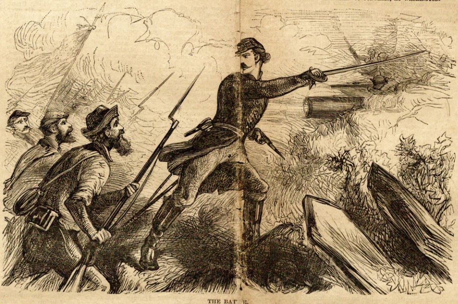

THE BAT[illegible]E.

CHAPTER I.

THE EVE OF THE BATTLE.

Time: Late in the autumn of 1862. Place: A wagon-path in a deep wood, near the bank of the Tennessee river. The moon, which had been near the middle of its journey, when the sun went down, was now touching the tree-tops at the far end of the path, and the man who came out from the wood and looked at the setting luminary, knew that the first watch of the night was nearly at an end. But this man was no common sentinel, for the failing moonbeams found reflection in a gilt bugle upon his hat, besides revealing a pair of straps upon his shoulders which bore the double bars of a captain. A tall, lithe form, with movements all ease and grace, even in that solemn place; a face looking somewhat pale in the waning light of the silvery crescent, and quite young—young, considering the responsibility betokened by the badge he wore, and considering, too, the needs of the hour at that time, and in that region. He gazed at the moon until he had calculated the time, and then moved forward towards a large log that lay by the side of the path a few yards ahead, where he was upon the point of seating himself when the sound of a footfall arrested his movement. He stood and watched until he descried a dark form emerging from the corner of an angle in the path, and then he drew a pistol and cocked it.

"Who comes there?"

"A friend, with the countersign."

"Advance, friend, with the countersign." And presently: "Halt! Give me the countersign."

A whispered word, and the captain eased down the hammer of his pistol, and put the weapon away.

"How is this, Colonel? Do you constitute yourself Grand Rounds for to-night?"

"No, no, Captain. I just came in from headquarters, and thought I would take a stroll along the picket line. Ah! here is a seat ready at our hands."

As the colonel thus spoke he stood so that the moonbeams fell upon his face, revealing a tall, stout frame; broad, heavy shoulders; features bold, and strongly marked; the strong, heavy jaw, the compact brow, the small, close ear, and the firm, iron will that belongs to the fighter. His dark hair was close-cut, and the only beard was the magnificent mustache that adorned his upper lip, sweeping away in graceful curves half across either cheek. And this was Colonel Henry Ward, very soon to mount a silver star in place of the eagle that now adorned his shoulder-strap.

The captain looked very young by the side of his colonel; and yet the latter was a young man—only two-and-thirty—but the years of his manhood had been spent in the wilds of the Western forests, where he had served the government in the capacity of both civil and military engineer; and where he had fought many a battle in the war-path of the marauding redskins. A bold, brave, experienced warrior was Col. Ward; and young, and slim, and inexperienced was the captain by his side; and yet, as they sat down together upon that log, the stern-visaged veteran regarded his companion with marked respect, and in his manner was to be observed that easy familiarity which the warrior in command only exhibits towards those who have won his esteem and his love.

"How long since you have visited the outer line of our pickets?" asked the colonel, after they had seated themselves.

"I have just come in, sir. We have twenty cavalrymen in advance, and I found them all on the alert."

"And what of the enemy?"

"I saw the glimmering of their expiring camp-fires, and all seemed quiet on their front."

"But it won't be so quiet when the day breaks, my boy. We shall have music, and you will have a chance to christen your sword. How does it strike you, Appleton? There they are, an army of savage, eager men, led by officers who know how to fight; in numbers fully equal to our own; and we know that they will attack us in the morning. Now tell me, candidly: Don't you begin to wish you were out of it?"

George Appleton looked up into the face of his colonel; but the light of the moon had failed him, and he could not see the expression that rested there, but the voice had been kind and sympathetic, and he was not offended.

"Colonel Ward," he said, "I wouldn't have liked that another man should have asked me that; but I know you can judge me for what I am. I am young, and I have a mother whom I love above all else on earth—a mother whose all of life is bound up in me. God knows I would like to live for that blessed mother; but—but— Pshaw! Why should I tell you whether I will flinch or no? Let the coming trial speak for me."

"My dear boy," cried Ward, grasping the youth's hand, "if I could doubt your courage and devotion I would leave the service to-morrow, for I should doubt every man in the army. You did not understand me, George. I know that you will be called into action to-morrow, and it must be a smart one; for the enemy before us not only means *fight*, but it is a fighting crew, led by fighting officers, and I had a curiosity to know how you felt."

"I'll tell you how I feel," replied Appleton. "I feel a heavy weight upon me. For the life of me I cannot join in the feeling which gives birth to song and jest. I am almost oppressed with the weight of solemn thought and feeling that rests upon me. I feel myself in the position of one who has a stern yet painful duty to perform. But it is a duty, and I shall perform it to the best of my ability."

"George," said the colonel, after a little pause, "do you know that I am puzzled to account for your presence here. I know how you loved your mother, and I know how much she loved you and how much she depended upon you for her joys of life; and then when I remember that you had just begun to rise in your profession—that people were just beginning to look upon George Appleton as an ornament to the bar,—when I think of all the circumstances attending your situation, I am at a loss to understand how you came to throw yourself into the ranks as you did."

"Not exactly into the ranks, my dear Colonel," returned George, in a tone which betrayed the smile upon his handsome face. "You know Judge Wainwright offered me a commission six months before I concluded to accept it?"

"Yes," added Ward; "he knew that you were one of the most thorough militia officers in the county, and he knew you could handle a company as it should be handled. But when our judge urged you to go, how many urged you to stay?"

"I believe, all the rest."

"So I thought. And now, tell me, George, did not your mother urge you to go?"

"Yes."

"Ah! And that is what puzzles me. Before we left the old home camp your mother came to me and talked with me of you. She—"

The colonel hesitated, and when George looked up he found him sitting with his head resting upon his hand.

"George!" cried the stern warrior, starting out from his reverie, "once for all time I throw the blessed dream from me. Of all the women I ever saw, that mild, sweet, noble-hearted woman is the only one that ever awoke an impulse of pure, worshipful love in my heart. God bless her, now and ever!"

Unable to speak, George Appleton reached out and grasped his companion's hand. A moment so, and then the colonel resumed:

"Your mother asked me to be a friend to her boy; to watch over him; and, above all, should any harm befall him, to let her know immediately. She seemed to have a presentiment that you would require her nursing before you got through with the work."

"But, Colonel, you will not—"

"Hush, my boy. Leave that all with me. I shall do just as I think best. And now tell me: Do you know why your mother was so willing—aye, even anxious—that you should enter into this dangerous work?"

The young man reflected a few moments, and then said:

"I can only tell you this, Colonel: My mother was very intimate with the family of Mr. Washburne. She was in there one evening when a letter was received from a member of the family then stopping at Washington, and in the letter it was announced that President Lincoln had said that unless the people speedily rallied in greater numbers than ever to the support of the Union, he feared our cause would meet with overwhelming disaster. My mother borrowed the letter and brought it home, and gave it to me to read. When I had read it I said, 'Amen!' Then my mother came to my side and placed her hand upon my head, and she said to me:

"'George, would you like to accept the commission that has been offered you?'

"I told her I feared i[illegible]ot be open to me then. But she said [illegible] had seen the adjutant-general, [illegible]d told her that her son should h[illegible] [illegible] to go. I felt it to be a ster[illegible]perative duty. The time was when I had taken pride in mounting the rostrum and preaching up the crusade in favor of the Union, and I know that I had gained many [illegible] by my arguments and appeals. But a change had come over me. The war, instead of coming to an end, was on the increase, and I came to feel that it was as much my duty to go as anybody's. Hardly a man went who did not sunder some dear and near tie. Even husbands and fathers left wives and children; and why could not I leave my mother? I had come to feel ashamed of myself, and for three months I had not dared to speak in public and urge upon others a duty which I would not myself perform. Of course I was ready to go. I only asked, 'Mother, will you suffer me to leave you?' And she said to me:

"'My son, I have a solemn duty to perform. God calls to me from heaven and bids me be true. O, go, my son!—go, and do your whole duty.'

"Then she threw her arms around my neck and blessed me; and when I would have asked her if she was sure she would not repine, she placed her hand upon my mouth.

"'Go!' she said again. 'You are all I have on earth to live for, and you I give to this holy cause of our country. If upon the sacred altar your life is taken, be sure I shall soon follow you to the world where all warfare ceases. It is hard thus to send you into the jaws of the demon of war, but if you can help to conquer and overcome the terrible evil, we can praise God even for his trials.'

"As you may suppose, Colonel, I was deeply moved. I felt stronger and braver; and when I stood up I held my head higher than I had held it for months. I kissed my mother and went to bed; and in the morning I went out and enlisted. They might give me a commission, or not, as they pleased. I enlisted, and then went to my office, where I sat down and turned my business over into the hands of my partner. I had just got the last item transferred to his docket when in came a messenger from the adjutant-general. I went up, and the first thing the general did was to put a folded paper into my hand. I opened it, and found it to be a captain's commission from our governor. That night I made a speech in the market place. O! how free and bold my tongue was then. The general had asked me to try an experiment. He had more confidence in the result than I had. But I tried it. I told them I had enlisted; and I declared to them that I would cheerfully have gone out as a private; but the governor had seen fit to give me a captain's commission; and now I wanted a company. 'Give me a company,' said I, 'and I'll throw up my commission, and put the election of all the officers into the hands of the men.' One hundred and thirty-six men of that crowd enlisted before noon of the next day. My company had passed the surgeon's hands before night, and on the next day we organized. I received every vote for captain, and my lieutenants were elected with equal unanimity. Colonel, of the hundred and one men of my company not one of us has ever yet been in action. If we have fighting on the morrow, you shall not be ashamed of Company G."

"Give us your hand, my boy! God bless you! I will remember your mother's petition, and I will not disappoint her while I live. I can understand now why she was so ready to send you to the field. She saw—"

Before the colonel could finish the sentence the sound of approaching footsteps interrupted the conversation, and shortly afterwards a sergeant of the guard with the relief came up. Capt. Appleton bade the colonel good night, and went with the sergeant.

* * * * * *

Eight hours from the time of the relief of the guard at midnight. Capt. George Appleton, in full uniform, with his sword in his hand, and a pair of silver-mounted revolvers in his belt, stood leaning against a tree, in conversation with his first lieutenant. Now that we see him by daylight we find a better man than he had looked at night by the side of his stalwart and bulky colonel. His age was four-and-twenty; his form tall, lithe, perfectly erect, and finely proportioned; and if, at first sight, he seemed to lack in muscle, it was plain to be seen that he possessed that rare quality of nerve which transforms every muscular fi[illegible] into a thread of finely [illegible] inclined to wavy curls; a neatly turned and manly mustache graced his lip; his eyes were of a dark grayish blue, and exceedingly bright and clear; while the other features were not only regular and finely formed, but purely classic in their manly beauty and strength. He was the last man one would have selected in a drawing-room for a fighter—the very last; and yet, as he now stood, not a general could have looked upon him without saying to himself—"Ah! I can rely upon that man."

"O!" exclaimed Marshall—Appleton's first lieutenant—"I hope we shall not have to wait much longer!"

Appleton made no reply, but turned and looked at his men who were drawn up behind him. There they stood, most of them pale, and some of them trembling; and all with their lips tightly compressed and their hands fiercely grasping their muskets.

Of all the situations to try men's souls the situation which those men then occupied was one of the most trying. The battle had been raging almost an hour. Kirby, and Jones, and Wilson were in with their divisions—six thousand men, at least, were fighting and dying not a mile away, the earth was shaken by the thunder of artillery, the air was rent and cracked by the sharp ringing of musketry; shell shrieked overhead, sometimes falling and tearing up the turf among the reserves, sometimes clipping off the tops of trees, and anon bursting in the air and scattering their fragments through the forest. And the smoke had come thick and dense—the smoke, and the roar, and the rattle, and the howl, and the shriek, and—anon— Ah! now these men, standing in reserve, waiting until their comrades are tired out, and thinned out, and their muskets befouled and overheated; these reserves, who have never yet been in battle, drawn up here to wait their turn—they have heard all sounds but one, and that is coming.

Men come down through the dark aisles of the forest bearing stretchers formed of the muskets of those who will use them no more; and on those stretchers are men torn and bleeding—bleeding and groaning—groaning and dying! On they come, for our friends have been drawn up in the glade which the surgeon had selected for his field hospital,—on they come—men shot with round bullet and buckshot; men torn with the explosive slug; men crushed with cannon-ball and mangled with shell; and right here, under their very eyes, the surgeons go at their awful work! And hence it was that Thaddeus Marshall cried out:

"O, I hope we shall not have to wait much longer!"

Appleton walked down before his men, saying as he went:

"Boys, God knows I don't love this. I feel the same as you feel. My heart is pained, and I feel it ache and throb; but we'll do our duty. They can say that the boys of Company G trembled when they saw their own comrades suffering; but they won't be able to say that we trembled in the face of the enemy."

"Three cheers for Captain Appleton!" shouted Bill Spicer, the orderly sergeant.

And the cheers were given with a will—three loud, hearty, soul-sent cheers, in which those men set free the feelings that had been pent up until they could scarcely control themselves.

The other companies in the regiment heard the cheering, and supposing that something must have happened to give cause for it, as it came from the extreme right of the line, they echoed it with right good will. Cheering is contagious in an army; and in a few seconds the cheer started by Sergeant Spicer for his captain had been caught up and reproduced by the whole line of ten regiments.

"Ha! See! Who's that?"

A staff officer came dashing down from the front, and his report was:

"Our boys are falling back! Push to the front and charge in line of battle!"

"Captain Appleton, do you realize that you have the right of this line?"

"Yes, sir; and if the line follows me it will find the enemy, or die on the way!"

"Good!"

"Count us in with our captain, General!" cried Sergeant Spicer.

"Aye!" and "Hurrah!" from the whole company, and again the long line caught the inspiration.

The general's eye kindled, and the cloud was lifted from his brow in a moment.

"Forward! When you see the enemy pitch in, and be sure you don't discharge a musket until you can mark your man! Pass the word down the line.—Double quick!—March!"

CHAPTER II.

THE BATTLE—A CONTRABAND'S MISSION.

Col. Ward was on the left of the line, acting as brigadier, with three regiments in his immediate command; and he had orders, as soon as he got clear of the wood, to oblique his brigade to the left, and strike the enemy on the right flank. This order he had communicated to his lieutenant-colonel, and to the colonels of the other regiments.

Louder and louder grew the din; thicker and thicker became the smoke, until at length the line emerged from the wood, entering upon a scene that changed the nerves of every brave and resolute man to steel. Man and beast, dead and dying, lay upon the gory sward everywhere; man and beast, alive and without control, rushed hither and thither; and a score or more of these lost men Ward forced into his ranks. Hark! Ah! a few minutes of tremulousness as this new music cuts upon the ear—this whistling of the unseen bullets that fill the air, dropping here and there before the advancing line with a dull *thud*, and throwing up little spurts of dust as big rain-drops do when they fall upon the dry and dusty road—some of them falling thus in advance, while others go whistling over-head—but not all so—ah! not all! There is another sound—a quick, heavy *thuck*—and a man throws up his hands and falls backward; or, if he be eager on the double-quick, he cries out "*I'm shot!*" and falls prone upon his face. O! that is the most horrible sound of all. Even amid the fiercest din it can be heard three files away—that fatal *thuck* that means always death; for the hitting of a limb produces no such sound. It is only when the broad bosom is pierced—when the leaden messenger has struck home to the vitals, that the dread note is heard.

And now to George Appleton there was no such man [illegible] the field as SELF. He saw [illegible] followed him from [illegible] the far-off land of grain and prairie—he thought only how he should lead them to their duty with as little loss as possible. One hundred beside himself. Ah! those leaden drops in the air—striking now in front of the line, then flying overhead, and anon the dreadful sound that makes a soldier's requiem. They were falling. Four had fallen. And then the captain forgot to look at death.

And this was a battle! What could he see? Only death and destruction let loose, and the carnival enveloped in sulphurous flames and smoke. But soon he distinguished a point where the flame was perceptible, and whence came a continuous roar; and he observed that he was pushing towards that mouth of fire.

Presently a staff-officer, his uniform rent and torn, and his face begrimed till he looked like a negro, came dashing out from the cloud of smoke, crying:

"Where is Ward's brigade?"

"Here!" thundered Ward.

"Good! Do you see that battery?"

"Yes."

"Take it, and the day is ours. Lose it, and all is lost!"

"What support has it?"

"We can't tell."

"Never mind. We're good for it! Forward! Forward!"

The words had hardly fallen from the brigadier's lips when a *thuck* sounded in Appleton's ear, and in another moment he saw the gallant Hastings, their lieutenant-colonel, pitch forward without a word. Ward leaped from his horse, and tore open the fallen man's shirt.

"It's of no use, Captain," he said to Appleton, who had called for two men to take him to the rear. "He's past help! We can't spare men to bear away dead bodies. Forward. Turn your command over to Marshall, for you are colonel of the regiment now."

The major was in hospital.

On—on—through fire and smoke—against crashing shot and bursting shell; against shrieking spike and the deadly shower of scattered cannister; great gaps opening through the ranks and then growing solid again as the eager men rushed in. On—on—till the flames belched forth into the very faces of the advancing column, whose shouts of defiance vied with the thunder of the well-served double battery. On to the very summit of the hill, and there, for the time, young Appleton forgot his command. He saw grim men standing at the breech of a heavy cannon; he saw the loaders step away from the muzzle, and he saw a dark-visaged man seize the lanyard. That gun, if fired, would pour death into the ranks of his friends, and with a wild bound he reached the spot in season to send a bullet from his revolver through the head of the cannonier. On the the next instant half a dozen fierce men turned upon him; but he leaped back, shooting down the foremost one as he did so, and while the thought flashed through his mind that he must die, another sound broke upon his ear—the gleaming of a hundred bayonets gladdened his eyes,—his own boys were about him, and as yet he knew that they had reserved their fire.

"Surrender!" the youthful captain shouted. "If you flee we'll shoot you in the backs. Lay down your arms!"

The hill was carried; the battery of nine guns was captured, and Appleton found himself in possession of about fifty prisoners. The infantry support had fled, and Ward, with two regiments, was in hot pursuit. As quickly as possible, Appleton disarmed his prisoners and sent them off under a guard of twelve men, who marched behind them with presented muskets, ready to drop the first who should falter.

Our hero had seen his prisoners thus disposed of when he caught sight of a body of the enemy, about a thousand strong, hurrying across the plain below him with the evident intention of breaking through the weakening Federal line near the centre; and upon looking further away he made sure, though he could not see distinctly, that another body was sweeping around upon the Federal right flank.

"Now, boys of the gallant Tenth!" he cried, "let us see what sort of artillerymen we can make! Set this gun; it is all loaded. Clap grape into the empty ones! Lively now! Lively, and the day is ours!"

The distance was a grand one for grape, and at the very first shot, which Appleton made with his own hands, having with his own eyes sighted the piece—sighted it far enough ahead so as to catch the lanyard and draw when the object came in range,—at this first shot the enemy's line staggered, for it struck them upon the flank, and the iron eggs went crashing through the length of a whole company.

What a strange make-up of emotion and passion is man! Only half an hour ago these men were shuddering at the sight of death; praying God that the battle might cease without further bloodshed; watching every fiery shell, and dodging at the whistle of every bullet; and now they work there upon the hill, serving the guns they have captured; work like so many demons, shouting for joy when they see the serried host breaking up under their merciless fire; working on, recking not a whit for the bullets that shriek their death-whistle in their ears,—intent only on sweeping away a mass of brother-men!

And they do it. Their aim is sure; they serve the guns with skill; ammunition is handy; and ere the advancing, yelling host is half way across the plain half its numbers have bitten the dust, and the remainder turn and flee. And from that moment the battle is over, all else being flight and pursuit.

So much had our hero seen of the Battle of Broad River; and so much had he done towards the victory which had been gained. The names of generals went to Washington with high-sounding praise; and well did they deserve it—those who laid the plans that resulted so favorably. And honorable mention was made of George Appleton in the report of his brigadier. But it was never said that but for Capt. Appleton the day at Broad River might have been lost to the Federal arms. And yet that thing might have been said, and the record would not have been a false one!

It was late in the day when the worn and weary men had come in from the chase; and then came the burying of the dead, and the bringing in of the wounded who had not yet been taken from the field. It was a sad and mournful task; and many a true heart, beating beneath a private's humble blouse, became the fount of prayers as fervent and as solemn as ever came from the lips of the commissioned chaplain. The night was well advanced when the last sod had been laid above the resting-place of the fallen brave; and then came sleep, sound and refreshing. When the morning dawned it was evident that the enemy had pushed away in haste to the southward; and having made provision for his wounded and his prisoners, the commander started on in pursuit, with scouts of cavalry on the flanks and in front.

Night came again, and found our army upon the northern bank of a broad tributary of the Tennessee, across which the enemy had made their way in safety, leaving only the charred and smoking timbers of the bridge that had borne them over to greet the eyes of their eager pursuers.

"Never mind," cried Col. Ward. "They won't gain a great deal. While they sleep I will throw a bridge across this stream that will answer our purpose." And he was as good as his word. With five hundred men to help him, and with the assistance of a few good boats which they picked up, the thing was so far accomplished that by the time the next day's sun was two hours high the artillery was all over.

But the bridge is getting ahead of us, as those who were to cross it got ahead of our hero.

Capt. Appleton was [illegible] at midnight [illegible] of the relief guards, and [illegible] the old instinct that the call "meant him," he started up. But the pleasant remembrance that he had not been detailed very soon restrained his hurried movements, and he was about to crawl back under his blanket again when Col. Ward entered the tent.

"Eh? Is the bridge done, Colonel?"

"Not yet, Captain; but we're progressing famously. I've only come up after a little ammunition. It's rather chilly work in the water."

The colonel opened a camp chest and took therefrom a demijohn, and as he turned to depart the captain laid himself once more upon his greensward bed, but not to close his eyes. He had barely drawn his blanket up over his shoulders when he heard voices outside. Some one had stopped the colonel, and the first words he distinctly caught, as he raised himself upon his elbow, were:

"We want the best man we've got, Colonel, and I think you can tell us where he is." It was the voice of Gen. Wilson's adjutant.

"Who is he?"

"The captain who took the double battery at Broad River—Appleton."

"Aye, you're right. He is the best man of his years in the army, and he's under a blanket in this very tent. What's up now?"

"I don't know, Colonel. I only know that the general wants him."

"I'll call him."

So Ward came back, and found our hero already upon his feet.

"Wilson wants you, my boy. If it's a scouting expedition, remember and keep the middle of the path always. Keep both eyes open, and trust nothing that isn't under your hand. Don't skulk in the deep shadows, thinking thereby to get on without being seen, for the foe can skulk twice to your once, and always take you on the dark side."

Appleton promised his colonel that he would act with circumspection, let the duty be what it would; and having put on his blouse and buckled on his sword, he went out and accompanied the adjutant to the quarters of Gen. Wilson, where he found several other officers, while at the end of the mess-board which served for a table stood a young negro, who, Appleton knew, was a stranger in the army. Brief compliments were passed, and then Wilson presented the business.

"Captain Appleton, this boy has just made his way to our camp, and he informs us that, not far away up the stream, is Captain Clymer, of Thorne's Rangers, with nearly a hundred slaves which he has run away from different plantations, and which are to be put to work upon the enemy's fortifications at Darnton. Clymer has only thirty of his own men with him, and this boy assures me that the negroes will fight against them if they find a party come to set them free. Will you go and bring that whole mess of calamity into camp?"

"I'll try, sir," was Appleton's prompt and simple reply.

"That's the talk. How many men have you left of your own company?"

"Fifty-eight fit for duty, sir."

"And that is enough. I think there is no doubt about this fellow's honesty."

The negro was a fine-looking fellow, purely black, clean and tidy, of medium height and very strongly built, and apparently about one-and-twenty. Ever since Appleton had entered the tent the gaze of the contraband had been fixed upon him with a sort of vacant, wondering stare, his eyes and his mouth wide open, and not a sign of relief to the absorbing gaze until the general thus alluded to his honesty. At these words he started, and presently said:

"Dis yere body—dese hands, an' dis whole boy—b'longs to Mas'r St. Denis. So my fader b'longs to Mas'r St. Denis. Captain Clymer's got almost a hundred ob us—picked up in different places—an' my poor fader's among 'um. He's only got t'irty men 'sides hisself, an' he t'inks he's safe in de old house. I don't b'lieve he knows I'm gone yet. Here I is. If dar's been a lie, you ken kill me. I know de risk I run berry well, an' if I must die, I'll die on de side ob liberty, please God! I wouldn't hab 'tray'd Mas'r Clymer if he hadn't done dis t'ing. But he's a drefful wicked man."

"I know him," said Wilson "and I am not afraid to trust you. You are very sure that Clymer has no other men at hand?"

"His hab'n oder men, Mas'r Gen'ril, is sartinly onpossible; 'kase he's been left behind purpose to bring dise yere slaves up to Darnton. He hasn't got not'in' to do wid de army you 's arter."

Appleton asked a few questions; and more than once the negro, who had given his name as Dave St. Denis, forgot to answer in his still absorbing gaze into the young captain's face, and at length our hero demanded:

"Say, boy—what do you find about me that interests you so much?"

"I's tryin' to t'ink whar Ise seed you afore, mas'r."

"Then you think you've seen me before?"

"Yes—'pears to me sartin I hab."

"How far north have you ever been?"

"Nebber no furder 'n I be now."

"Then you never saw me until now."

The negro shook his head, evidently unwilling to believe the assertion of the Federal officer against the evidence of his own senses; but he was now inclined to attend to business, and ere long Capt. Appleton went away to make his preparations, taking the contraband with him.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

GHOSTS, SIR.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

"Well," said Mr. Budd, smiling amiably as the woman who had been showing him the little village house which he was about to hire, locked the door behind them and put on her sunbonnet—"well, I can't say that I see any objection to the house for a small family of two and a baby. Do you, now?"

"There is generally some objection that folks don't notice at first," replied the woman, with a peculiar expression of countenance.

"Come, now," said Mr. Budd. "Don't you think you ought to mention them, if you know any?"

"Well," replied the woman, examining the door-key carefully, as though she had never seen it before—"well, sir, sometimes I think I ought, and sometimes I think I hadn't ought to; but you are a stranger here, and you don't look as if you'd tell on me, for I get a little bit for showing the house and keeping of it dusted; and I need everything I get, with my husband mostly off on sprees, and four children; but if you'll promise not to say *I* told—"

"You may rely on me," said Mr. Budd. "Certainly, it will be doing me a favor, and—by the way—here's something to buy some candy for the children," and he slipped a dollar note into her hand.

"Oh! thank you, sir!" said the poor woman. "I'm sure your're too kind, and I feel it my duty to tell *you*. The house is haunted, sir; and no matter who says it isn't, don't believe 'em."

Mr. Budd repressed a smile.

"Now, my dear woman," he said, "did you ever see the ghost?"

"I've heard him," said the woman, "that's enough for *me*. You know there is but one good bedroom in the house. You've got to sleep there. The servants have one over the kitchen, but there's only one over the parlor and dining-room. There was where old Mr. Pickrel was murdered, and there he groans every night. It was ten years ago, but as the clock strikes eleven he begins it. Such deep, horrid groans, sir, as you wouldn't believe was possible for a sperit. Folks in the town wouldn't live there for nothin' you could offer, and when strangers hires it they goes at once. One night is enough for them. Oh, please, sir, say the folks at the hotel told you. They might hev done it, for they tell everybody. Say, if you please, 'twas some one at the hotel. The agent wouldn't say nothin' to [illegible]."

"I'll be careful," said Mr. Budd. "I don't believe in ghosts myself, but I'm obliged to you. My wife might be nervous. I shan't allow the agent to know *you* said a word. Good-by."

Away hurried Mr. Budd and found the agent busy at his desk in his office. A long-featured man, with a decided aroma of whisky about him and the smile of a shark.

"Well," he said, blandly, "you've seen the house. Like it?"

"It's a cosy little box enough for the summer," said Mr. Budd, "and not too much room for visitors, which is an advantage sometimes; but—it's very absurd—what is it they mean at the hotel—"

"Oh! they've told you the ghost story, I suppose," said the agent. "*You* take no stock in nonsense of that sort, I hope. *I* don't."

"Well, I certainly do not," said Mr. Budd; "but if there is anything mysterious my wife won't like it."

At this the agent became sarcastic, and Mr. Budd felt extremely foolish, and finally hired the house and determined to keep the ghost story to himself.

Accordingly the furniture was sent over, a servant installed, and Mrs. Budd and the baby came down by the train the day after everything was settled.

The tiny house charmed the little woman; so did the garden, the smooth, well-kept road winding away like a smooth brown ribbon, and the pretty glimpse of river to be had from the porch. The houses just there were built two together, gardens on either side, so that, small as they were, they looked quite important. A stout German gentleman was smoking his pipe on his porch, and as the evening set in Mr. Budd resolved to scrape acquaintance. The German was friendly, and finally Mr. Budd mentioned the ghost.

"Vell," replied the old gentleman, shrugging his shoulders, "I dink it is all some foolishness. I never hear nodings. My vife she hear nodings. We goes to our beds at den o'clock, and shleeps undil Katrina shakes us avake. Ve is bot heavy shleepers. Vell, I say drink a little lager before you goes to bed, and if dot ghost comes he not vaken you mit his groans. Eh? I guess he vas de chimney vane blowin' mit de vind."

Mr. Budd examined the vane and oiled it, and when supper was over and the light lit, began to feel that the house was too cozy for the habitation of a ghost. At ten Mrs. Budd carried the baby up stairs, and Mr. Budd promised to follow when he had read his paper through. It was eleven before he finished, and he had just seen to the bolts, and was about to turn out the light, when his wife, wrapped in a cloak, and clasping the baby in her arms, crept into the room, pale and trembling, and with her teeth chattering in her head.

"Oh, Ben, my dear!" she cried. "Thank Heaven, there is nothing the matter with you. Some one is being murdered, I'm sure. I am afraid it is Ann. Oh, what shall we do?"

Mr. Budd, nearly as white as his wife, dashed open the door leading to the passage and ran up the kitchen stairs. A cry of "Saints protect us!" was heard, and he returned to the parlor.

"Ann was quietly asleep until I wakened her," he said. "I'll go up stairs and see what it is. Stay here."

But Mrs. Budd, vowing she would not be left alone, followed him.

The little bedroom, bright with pink and blue chintz, and white spreads and curtains, should have been the most peaceful place on earth, but it was at the moment full of the most fearful sounds that ever fell on mortal ear. Horrible groans, long-drawn ohs! Then gurgles and gaspings! Then silence for a moment, only to make the renewed moanings more terrible.

In fact, Mr. and Mrs. Budd, having listened to these awful sounds for some time, retreated to the parlor, and there sat until morning, Mr. Budd having confessed to the fact of the story connected with the house.

"But you know, Kitty, I couldn't believe in ghosts, and I don't now, of course," he added, by way of moral.

"Well, I am convinced, for one," faltered Mrs. Budd. "That *could* be nothing but some one being murdered. And since no one is being murdered, of course it is a—a—manifestation."

This was said as the dawn was breaking and the groans had ended with what seemed the sounds of a fearful struggle, and a loud "Ah, God!"

After breakfast Mr. Budd, weary with his vigil, set out to call on his landlord and give up the house.

The landlord was out and a placard on his door announced that he was not to be back for a week. Mr. Budd returned wearily and consulted with his wife, and since no harm had been done them he decided to have a mattress brought down into the parlor and try one night more. Meanwhile they might find another house, and if the rent must be lost, it must, that was all.

But no other house was to let within the village or outside it. Summer guests thronged the place, and night fell, and the Budds saw the darkness come with terror in their hearts. Mrs. Budd, however, fell asleep on the improvised mattress, and her husband, armed with a lantern, crept up stairs to listen to the ghost again.

He was worse than before, for he gasped more, but as Mr. Budd grew calmer it occurred to him that the sound was not *in* the room. He crossed it and laid his ear to the wall. The fearful noise came from the next house. Perhaps the German was playing ghost to lower the value of the property and buy it cheap. The roof of the portico was beneath the open window. Mr. Budd slipped softly out upon it and crept toward his neighbor's casement.

It was wide open. A lamp stood on the chamber mantle-piece and its light fell upon a great oaken bedstead and two night-capped heads reposing on fat pillows. From the large noses connected with these heads proceeded the most fearful snores ever heard by mortal ear. These were the sounds that had driven tenant after tenant from the adjoining house and given it the reputation of being haunted.

Mrs. Budd slept sweetly—Mr. Budd listened until Katrina, the servant, went through the process of shaking her master and mistress awake, and heard his neighbor utter his morning moan of Ach Gott, which we trust was devoutly meant, and then descended to relieve Mrs. Budd's mind; but though the ghost was laid, it was impossible to sleep in the pretty blue and pink bedroom. Their neighbor's snores drove slumber away as certainly as supernatural cries of murder could, and the Budds went back to town in a fortnight.

A RACE FOR A WIFE.

The period at which our story opens was that of the American clipper ships; an era of glory for the merchant marine of this country which it looks, alas! as if we should never see again. It was a time when sailing vessels competed with steamers in speed; when sea-captains were gentlemen, and their crews the finest sailors that ploughed the waves.

Captain Joshua Griffin sat in the parlor of his comfortable home in New York. The captain was an elderly man, small and spare, with a bright, glittering eye, and a firm mouth. In every line of his features was written the record of tempests and dangers successfully met and overcome. He was the principal owner in, and for many years commander of the ship *Osprey*, a vessel of 750 tons, and one of the finest clippers afloat. A year before he had given up the sea, and had been succeeded in his command of the *Osprey* by his first mate, Charles Lester, a young man of thirty. The old captain and the young captain were now seated together in the former's parlor, talking over a voyage to San Francisco, on [illegible] the *Osprey* was to sail the next day.

"And may [illegible]," said the young man, [illegible], "that on my return [illegible] withhold your consent to my marriage with your daughter, Annie?"

"Oh! never mind that; let us talk business," hurriedly replied Captain Griffin, as his face became grave.

"Captain," returned Charles Lester, earnestly, "you have put me off, on one pretence or another, for nearly two years. You know that Annie and I love each other devotedly. Why will you keep us apart?"

"What have you got to support a wife on?" said the old captain, gruffly.

"I have my position as captain of the *Osprey*, and some few dollars laid by for a rainy day."

"Humph! For all you know you may make a mess of this very voyage."

"You have seen enough of me to judge whether I am anything of a sailor or not. You yourself recommended me for captain."

"Oh! you were a good enough mate, and have done very well as captain, so far."

"Well, if I bring the *Osprey* back safe, and in good trim, from this voyage, may I claim the hand of your daughter as my reward?"

"Lester, you seek to take from me the comfort and joy of my old age. Her mother has, as you know, long been dead. She alone remains to me."

"In my marriage with Annie you will gain a son, not lose a daughter."

The old captain meditated for a moment, and then replied:

"It is now the twenty-fourth of September. You sail at daybreak to-morrow. The ship *Flying Cloud* made the voyage from here to San Francisco recently in eighty-four days. You should be able to make it in one hundred and six days at least, which will bring you there on December twentieth. Two weeks will be time enough for you to discharge your cargo and take in another; so on the fourth of January I shall expect you to sail on your homeward-bound trip. On April twentieth I shall expect the *Osprey* to drop anchor in this port. The wedding breakfast will be ready at noon of the same day, and the clergyman and bride waiting."

"The bridegroom will not keep them waiting long. Good-bye, sir," said the young captain.

"Good-bye. God speed you on your way, and bring the *Osprey* and her captain home safe and on time."

* * * * *

"Across the Western Ocean," sang the crew of the good ship *Osprey*, as they sheeted home the topsails the next morning, and the vessel, with a good whole-sail breeze, went bounding over the waters of the bright September sea.

"If we hold this breeze for a few days, Mr. Thompson, it will give us a good start," said Captain Lester, who was walking up and down the quarter-deck, to his first mate, who was standing near.

"Yes, sir. And if we get by Hatteras all right, and don't get a gale off the Horn, we'll be in 'Frisco on time."

"We'll give Hatteras a wide berth, and take our chances at the Horn."

The winds and the waves seemed to be in league with the brave young captain, and with the exception of one squally day off Cape Horn, the *Osprey* had good weather and favoring breezes. She made some remarkable runs, and on December eighteenth passed through the Golden Gate and dropped anchor in the harbor of San Francisco, two days ahead of time.

Before sailing from New York Charles Lester had taken a fond farewell of Annie Griffin. She was full of confidence that her lover would accomplish the task set him by her father, but nevertheless her blue eyes filled with tears and her lips faltered as she said good-bye. Never a fairer lass with brighter eyes had a sailor for a love, and as surely as the needle of the compass pointed to the magnetic pole, the heart of Charles Lester turned toward his love and saw her dear eyes guiding him amid the darkest nights across the most tempestuous seas.

Now, the *Osprey* was in San Francisco, and her captain hurried forward her unlading and lading with all the impatience of a lover whose promised bride awaited him on the other side of the continent. On the 30th of December the *Osprey* sailed for home, again four days ahead of the time counted upon by Captain Griffin. All went well until the vicinity of Cape Horn was reached, the vessel not being obliged to reef topsails but once on the run down the Pacific coast and much of the time carrying her royals and sky-sails.

"If this wind holds we will see Cape Horn to-morrow," remarked the captain.

"Yes, sir," replied the mate; "but I am afraid we shall have snow before night."

The sky was rapidly becoming overcast, and about four o'clock in the afternoon the mate's fears were realized, and a blinding snow-storm set in. The wind increased to half a gale and a tremendous sea began to roll up from the north-west, from which direction the wind was blowing. The vessel went tearing along through the thickly falling snow, with the waves striking her every now and then under her counter with a force that sent her shooting ahead and half buried her in a smother of foam and a cloud of spray.

It was the last of the summer in these latitudes, but the air was biting cold, and the spray froze on the decks and on the rigging. Several times the first mate suggested that the light sails be taken in and the topsails reefed. Captain Lester finally consented, and a little while after the wind increased so much that it was dangerous to run before it any longer, and the ship was laid-to.

Captain Lester was wild with impatience at the delay. Still he was four days ahead of time and could afford to lose a few hours. At nightfall the snow ceased and a cold rain set in. The wind and the sea were something terrific. Just enough sail was kept on the ship to hold her head to the wind. Great masses of green water poured constantly over her bows, and the vessel labored heavily. Every minute those on board feared that the ship would broach to. Her decks were swept fore and aft, the boats were carried away and the foremast frightfully strained. Captain Lester stood on deck, with a speaking-trumpet in his hand, shouting out orders to the half frozen sailors who were doing their best to save the ship. An hour before, when the storm first became dangerous, his face had worn an expression of anxiety. Now his whole being was aroused to grapple with the danger, and high resolve and daring was in his every look and tone. The foremast, as has been stated, was already weakened, and the captain ordered the men to bend on some extra stays to prevent it toppling over. Just then came a fiercer gust of wind, a more tremendous sea, and the mast went by the board, falling over the port-bow. This dragged the head of the ship around, and she broached to and was thrown on her beam ends. But the *Osprey* was a staunch ship, and, the mast being cut free, she soon righted. There being no head-sail now, however, she could not be brought up into the wind again. The only thing left (for it would not do to let the vessel lie there in the trough of the sea) was to try and make her pay off before the wind and then scud. Could any vessel, however well built or staunch, scud in such a sea as that? There was no alternative; it must be done. With some difficulty she was got before the wind, and, though every minute Captain Lester expected that some great wave would come thundering over the stern and send the ship to the bottom, the gallant craft rose on the angry seas and seemed as if she, too, were endowed with reason and fighting for life. Several small waves did, indeed, come aboard, one breaking in the doors of the after companionway and filling the cabin with water. So all that terrible night the good ship *Osprey* drove through the storm. But never once did she lose hope. Danger is said to "fly from the uplifted sword," and it seemed as if before the stout heart of Charles Lester even the fury of the elements were powerless; for when the morning dawned the storm had passed away, and only the huge waves rolling across the surface of the sea told that it had been there. The sailors worked all day rigging up a jury foremast. The sea went down, and a south-west wind sprang up that sent the ship along with a rapidity that brought Cape Horn in sight the next morning. A succession of fair winds carried the ship on her homeward way. Her runs were fair, but the fact that she was sailing under a jury foremost prevented her making as good time as she had on her outward bound trip. The four days which had been gained had not made up for this delay, and when Captain Lester took his observations, on the 19th of April, he was 420 miles from New York. Then, for the first time, his heart failed.

"It is no use," said he, throwing himself in despair on the lounge in the cabin; "the ship never can make 420 in 24 hours."

"The ship *Flying Cloud*," returned Mr. Thompson, the first mate, "made a run of 433¼ in 24 hours once."

"It is no use, no use!" repeated the captain, in a husky voice. "This ship is not the *Flying Cloud*, nor is she in the tail of a cyclone, as that ship was."

Just then there was a sound, shouting and running about on deck, mingled with the noise of flapping sails, and the sharp "whir" of the blocks.

"They are taking in sail," exclaimed Captain Lester, as he rushed on deck, followed by the first mate. He found that a squall was rushing down from the south-east, and that the second mate, seeing it coming, had taken in most of the light sails and was about to reef topsails.

"Never mind the topsails!" shouted the captain. "Rig preventer back-stays on the fore and main masts, and keep her dead before the wind."

The sea was comparatively smooth, and Captain Lester's spirit rose as he saw the storm come sweeping down across the water. If the ship's masts and sails would hold there was yet a chance to reach New York on April 20th. When the storm struck the *Osprey*, the vessel gave one great bound forward, and it seemed as if the masts or sails must give way under the strain. They held, however, and the ship went tearing along with frightful velocity. The captain seemed to put his whole soul into this wild race against time. The sailors, under his direction, worked with alacrity, hauling on this brace, and seemed to enter into the spirit of the occasion.

All the rest of that day and all night the vessel flew before the gale toward Sandy Hook, and when, on the morning of the 20th of April, the joyful sound of "Land ho!" rang from the lookout at the bows, there was enough wind still blowing to take the ship up to New York in good style, and as the clock of Trinity Church was striking eleven the *Osprey* dropped anchor off the Battery.

You may be sure that Charles Lester made short work of getting ashore, and that he was not long in reaching the residence of Captain Griffin. There was no time for him to change his clothes, even; so all fresh from the ocean, with crystals of salt caught from the flying spray in his beard and the bloom of the morning sea in his face, he rushed into the parlor of Captain Griffin's house and clasped his Annie in a fond embrace.

"Well, sir, you've won the race," said the old captain, taking out his watch. "I am proud to have you for a son-in-law. The carriage is at the door to take us to the church. Don't say anything about putting on your good clothes. How better can a sailor be married than in his sea-boots? I smell the wedding breakfast cooking in the kitchen now. The guests must be already at the church. Let us go."

How to Disarm an Enemy.

It is said that bees and wasps will not sting a person whose skin is imbued with honey. Hence those who are much exposed to the venom of these little creatures, when they have occasion to hive bees, or take a nest of wasps, smear their face and hands with honey, which is found to be the best preventive. When we are annoyed with insult, persecution, and opposition from perverse and malignant men, the best defence against their venom is to have the spirit bathed in honey. Let every part be saturated with meekness, gentleness, forbearance, and patience, and the most spiteful enemy will be disappointed in his endeavors to inflict a sting.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A Painter's Punctuation.—At the door of a certain hat store in New York hangs the sign, "We block your hat, while you wait for fifty cents." Therein entered a countryman, the other day, and answered affirmatively to the question of hat-blocking. The work was performed, and he was asked if he would have anything else in the hat line. He replied in the negative, but continued to "hang around," as though something was unsaid. At last the hatter asked what he was waiting for. "Waiting for that fifty cents," said he. He didn't get it. The painter had misplaced the comma.

THE LAWYERS AND THEIR CLIENTS.

Two lawyers, when a knotty case was o'er,
Shook hands, and were as good friends as before.
"Zounds!" said the losing client, "how come you
To be such friends, who were such foes just now?"
"Thou fool!" said one, "we lawyers, though so keen,
Like shears, ne'er cut ourselves, but what's between."

It is recorded that Daniel Webster was once accosted by a boorish backwoodsman, who asked, in an off-hand way: "Is this Mr. Webster?" "Yes, sir." "The great Mr. Webster, of Massachusetts?" "I am that same Mr. Webster, of Massachusetts." "Well, sir, I heard that you were a great man," quoth the stranger; "but I don't think so: I heard your speech, and understood every word you said."

Effeminacy Rebuked.—The late Dr. Archer, of London, dining once at a friend's, met there an effeminate stripling, who wore his hair in girlish length down upon his shoulders. On taking leave, the old doctor went up to Young Languish, and playfully tossing in his hand one of the youth's long locks, thus addressed him, laying a very strong emphasis on the first word:

"*Man* wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little *long*."

The editor of a paper in Illinois says: "A printer last week proposed to go into partnership with us. His name is Doolittle. The firm's name would sound very bad either way you put it: 'Steal and Do Little,' or 'Do Little and Steal.' We can't jine. One of us would soon be in the poor-house and the other in the penitentiary."

A Missouri lawyer, having lost his case, asked for a new trial, which the judge denied, at the same time remarking: "The court and jury think the prisoner a knave and fool." The lawyer replied: "My client wishes me to say that he is perfectly satisfied, as he is now sure that he has been *tried by a court and jury of his peers*."

"My dear," said a husband to his good, simple wife—"My dear, why can I not go out without catching a cold in my head?" The good, simple wife, after reflecting a moment, replied: "I don't know why you always take cold in your head, John, unless it's because you always go out without anything in it."

"You are the most stuck-up chap I ever saw," remarked a young lady to a youth whom she met at a candy-making party, to which he retorted: "And you are just as sweet as you are candied."

A lady having listened with delight to a speech by Senator Douglass—the "Little Giant"—on meeting him, said: "Mr. Douglass, I wish you were taller;" to which he instantly responded, with a courtly bow: "My dear madam, I should be happy to *stand higher in your estimation*."

A Yankee peddler, driving a large wagon, overtaking another in a small, neat vehicle, asked him what he was carrying. "Drugs," was the reply. "Go ahead!" cried the first speaker; "you'll fix things for me. I carry tombstones!"

A gentleman received an unpaid letter commencing: "Sir, your note of yesterday bears upon its face the stamp of falsehood." He answered: "Sir, I only wish your letter of yesterday bore upon its face a stamp of any kind."

"Is it true, Ned, that the girl you married was a millionaire?" asked a young man of his recently wedded friend, who answered: "No, John; she was something better than a millionaire; she was a milliner."

It is very certain that the person who accepts the following charge will have no sinecure: "Wanted, a lion trainer. A competent person to train and perform a group of young lions."

"Isn't it about time you paid me that bill?" said a tradesman to a customer, who replied: "It is not a question of *time*, my dear sir, but of *money*."

CURRENT ITEMS.

A pretty German girl, named Amelia Leuchte, was recently arrested on a charge of poisoning a whole family named Thayer, who live in Cleveland, Ohio. She was employed there as a servant, but was discharged by Mrs. Thayer. On Sunday every member of the family was taken seriously ill, and were with difficulty saved from dying. It is claimed that the girl returned and emptied a box of rat poison into the flour barrel for revenge at her discharge. The girl maintains that she is innocent of the charge made against her.

A steam boiler connected with a tannery in Rochester, N. H., exploded one afternoon last week with a detonation that is said to have been heard for miles, whereby four persons were badly injured and four others killed. The boiler was hurled some distance, passing through a brick wall and the base of a chimney ninety feet high. The chimney fell with a crash and buried a man in its ruins.

Benjamin F. Lawrence, a coachman at Greens Farms, Conn., attended a wedding at that place the other night, and while waiting for the bride and groom took occasion to exercise his horses. The team ran away, dashed down an embankment, upset the vehicle, and threw the driver into a stream of water. He was unable to extricate himself, and was drowned.

The boiler attached to the range in the house of Frank Sherwood, at Long Island City, exploded the other morning, killing Charles Sherwood, aged five, fatally injuring Kellogg Sherwood, and burning their mother terribly. She will probably lose her sight. Everything in the room was destroyed. It is supposed that the water in the boiler had frozen.

Mrs. Mary Lemmons, of Evansville, Ind., was badly burned one night lately while attempting to put up a stove-pipe. She placed an oil lamp on the stove, which overturned and exploded, setting her clothing on fire and burning her body and face in a shocking manner. Her husband was badly burned in attempting to extinguish the flames.

The Rev. Emanuel Burik, an itinerant German Catholic priest, was struck and instantly killed by a fast passenger train, twenty-five miles west of Adams station, N. J., on Thursday night of last week. He was walking on the track, apparently unaware of the train's approach. His neck was broken. He was about fifty years old.

The other day, Henry Jason, a Portuguese farmer of Suffolk county, L. I., attempted to murder Erastus Halsey, who called at his house to collect taxes. Jason inflicted two terrible wounds on Halsey's head with an axe and then escaped. He attempted to kill his two daughters a year ago.

A family named Kendall, consisting of five persons, living at Valley Station, Ky., were all poisoned recently by accidentally eating a preparation purchased for the purpose of killing rats. It was at first thought they would all die, but by strenuous exertions their lives were saved.

One day last week, at Egg Harbor, N. J., Robert Roehl invited Augustus Rosenberger to a shooting match at his father's farm. The body of Rosenberger was found the next day hidden away, and his watch and money were gone. Roehl was missing.

A waiter in a hotel at Elizabeth, N. J., aged seventeen, went with a lighted candle at night to the room of a guest who had recently come from Germany, and the man supposing the boy had come to rob him, drew a pistol and shot him dead.

Evans Harmon was killed and William Harmon and Robert Lamar fatally and several others seriously wounded in a row at Water Valley, Miss., on Wednesday of last week. The man who instigated the row escaped unhurt.

One morning recently three children of George Graham, of Brooklyn, were poisoned by eating griddle cakes, and their mother was so shocked by the occurrence that she was taken ill and died the next day.

The Rev. W. J. Crombleholm, who was on a visit to this country from England, was stricken with paralysis while on an express train from New York to Boston, and died soon after reaching the latter city.

A weaver, named John Shay, at work in Georgiaville, R. I., having had a dispute with his wife, cut her throat with a razor, inflicting a fatal wound, and then killed himself with the same implement.

William Fralix, a son of the city jailer, in Chattanooga, Tenn., accidentally shot his brother through the head, on Saturday of last week, and killed him instantly.

BEAUTY THAT WILL LAST.

BY MRS. M. A. KIDDER.

Give me beauty that will last
After youth's bright years are past;
After summer roses fade
From the cheeks of man and maid.

Something finer than the hue
Of the eye's most perfect blue,
Or the subtle, witching shine
Of the black orbs most divine.

Let it be the quenchless ray
Born of kindness, that will stay
When the color we admire
Shall have lost its transient fire.

Fadeless charms, that are not lost
When the hair is touched by frost;
When the furrowed lines of care
Mark the brow that once was fair.

What are lips of ruby red
That no kindly words have said?
What are hands as white as snow
That have done no good below?

What the fair and graceful form
That enshrines no spirit warm?
No fond heart that scatters wide
Smiles and sunshine o'er life's tide.

Priceless beauty of the soul!
This shall live while ages roll,
And therein beams love and grace
Like unto an angel's face.

Give us beauty that will last
After youth's bright years are past;
After joy, and care and pain
Like to sunshine after rain.

◆

DESERTED;

OR,

The Darling of Her Father's Heart.

By **ELIZA A. DUPUY,**

AUTHOR OF "THE EVIL GENIUS," "THE FAITHLESS GUARDIAN," &c., &c.

[We here give a synopsis of that portion of this story which has already been published, so that *new* readers of the *Ledger* can begin with this installment and understand it just the same as though they had read it all from the beginning: Inez de Castro was the only child of Don José de Castro, a Cuban planter of great wealth. Her mother, a New England lady, died when Inez was born. As the girl grew to womanhood she became surpassingly beautiful and selfwilled. Her father wished her to marry Don Alonzo D'Olivera, the decrepit heir to a dukedom, but Inez was determined to wed Wilton Clayton, a young South Carolinian, whom she had kept dangling after her for years. Don José one day showed her an American newspaper which contained an account of Clayton's marriage to Bessie Moore, a young girl who, while he was suffering from a wound, had nursed him in her mother's cottage to which he had been taken. This news filled Inez with anguish, for she loved Clayton passionately and knew that he loved her the same. She forthwith wrote him a letter, saying her father was ill and resolved that she should marry Don D'Olivera, and promising if Clayton would come to her to marry him at once. Clayton received this letter the very day he returned to his Carolina home (called Esperanza) with his innocent little wife, of whom he had already grown weary. Her mother had died, the wandering clergyman who married them had gone to parts unknown, and there were no witnesses of the marriage. Clayton told Bessie that he would never own her as his wife, but was going to Inez, whom he loved; and after informing his superintendent that Bessie was not his wife, but his ward, he hastily left Esperanza for Cuba. When he arrived at the residence of Don José, the old man, nearly blind and deaf, and at death's door, had ordered Inez to be ready to marry D'Olivera, who was expected that day. Inez, aided by the family physician, Dr. Levas, and also by the priest, as well as by her devoted maid, Juanita, had arranged to marry Clayton, as though he were D'Olivera. The deception was successfully practiced upon Don José, who died almost immediately after the marriage ceremony was performed. Inez seized upon the death of her father as a pretext for remaining secluded in her room. She had not told Clayton that she knew of his marriage with Bessie Moore, and he supposed her to be ignorant of it. She was plotting a scheme of vengeance upon that deserted wife, and wanted to bring Clayton to a state in which she could mould him to her wishes. So she left him in suspense for many days by her seclusion, and finally, when he had been driven wild by her repeated refusals to see him, she granted him an interview, which is described in the following chapter.]

CHAPTER VI.

THE INTERVIEW.

Clayton went to the dainty little apartment the woman had indicated as the place of meeting. It was a room appropriated exclusively to the use of Inez, and every object around him recalled to memory the happy hours he had passed there with the fair coquette who had lured him on—played with him only to throw him off, and then recalled him when it had become a crime in him to think of her as anything more than a friend.

His thoughts were very bitter, but he could not regret what he had done, since Inez had really given him her hand. Her heart he felt sure of also, and in the approaching interview he thought he could make her understand that he was now master of her fate, and that her willfulness must end.

At length the house was still; the servants had performed their evening duties, and with the exception of Juanita, had gone to their cottages; a stillness that seemed breathless reigned, and Clayton watched and waited for the appearance of Inez with a heart whose loud beating he could almost hear.

When his impatience had culminated, and he began to believe that she was only torturing him with a vain hope, he heard the sweep of a dress on the marble pavement of the hall, and in the next moment Inez stood in the dimly-lighted room, looking fair and stately in her mourning robes.

Clayton advanced eagerly to meet her, and in the impulse of the moment she threw herself upon his breast and returned the kisses he showered on her brow and lips.

"Oh! my love—my love," she faintly whispered—"I have tortured you; I know it, I feel it; but I, too, have been most unhappy. I dared not meet you till we could talk over what most vitally concerns us without danger of prying eyes or listening ears. I have proved that I can trust you, Wilton, and in your turn you must prove to me that you have been basely slandered. It must be so—for you would never have dared to give me your hand if another woman exists who has a claim upon it."

Clayton started guiltily, and hoarsely asked:

"Who has tried to poison your mind against me by asserting such a thing as that? You were right to regard it as a slander, Inez."

Inez threw back her head and gazed searchingly upon his face. Her own changed its expression, and she withdrew herself from his embrace as she almost coldly said:

"I shall be glad if you can *prove* to me that what I have heard and refused to believe is really a slander. What is this entanglement, Wilton? Speak the truth, for I love you well enough to forgive much."

"It is nothing—*nothing* that can or shall come between you and me, my darling."

"Then what does *this* mean?"

Inez thrust before him the flippant notice of his romantic marriage, and awaited his reply with an expression almost of defiant scorn.

Clayton glanced over it, and for a moment his senses reeled; but he recovered self-control and disdainfully asked:

"How came you by this precious morceau? If I were within reach of the man who wrote it, I would chastise him summarily for his impertinence. This, then, is the cause of the shameful treatment I have received at your hands since the day of our marriage."

"It is—and I again ask you if there is any foundation for the statements made there?"

"How did this come into your possession?" Clayton evasively asked.

"It was sent to me by Don Alonzo Olivera, and reached me but one hour before I gave you my hand," she falsely replied; for she had no intention of letting him know that she had recalled him after receiving what appeared a positive proof of his desertion of herself.

"And you refused to believe it, Inez? You plighted me your vows in spite of this treacherous attempt to imbitter you against me? My dearest love, how shall I thank you for such confidence in my undying love for you?"

"I have never doubted your love. I knew that if I held out my finger, you would fly back to me in spite of all obstacles. When you came, I could not believe that any formidable one existed to our union. I fulfilled the promise I had given you, for I could not believe that you would *dare* to place me in so equivocal a position as I must hold if there is any truth in the lines you hold in your hand."

"You were right. How could I, loving you better than my own life—how could I be guilty of so base a wrong toward you?"

His voice faltered in spite of his attempt to speak naturally, and Inez proudly said:

"The wrong is one against yourself more than against me, for if the woman referred to *is* your wife, the words that made me yours are null and void, and you stand before the world branded as a bigamist. I will know the whole truth before I go hence with you. If you attempt to deceive me I will penetrate the mystery, and then—it will be an evil hour in which I discern that you have been doubly false to me."

"Oh, Inez! what can I do, what say, to so implacable a judge as you threaten to be?"

"How can I judge you unless you are guilty? What have you to tell me, Wilton? I love you, and I can forgive anything—*anything*—if you will only confess to me how far you have compromised yourself in this affair."

"I have broken with the girl. There is no danger that she can interfere with me," he desperately said.

"But she can with *me*, and that I am resolved to prevent." And there was a tone of cold defiance in her voice which made him shiver.

"Why should you think of her, Inez? Bessie knows that I have given her up forever; that the—the liaison that existed between us is ended, and we are to be strangers to each other in the future."

"That may well be; but the woman who has crossed my path—who possibly stands between myself and the man I love—shall not be safe from my vengeance. She shall not live to say that she had a better right to the position you have so lately given to me."

The long repressed passion burst forth, and she stood before him with flashing eyes, curling lips and clenched hands—an incarnate Nemesis. With passionate vehemence she went on:

"You, with your wretched evasions, seek only to throw a vail over my eyes, that I may be led into the snare you have prepared for me. You, with your eyes open to all the enormity of your conduct, would plunge me into a sea of dishonor, from which there could be no escape. Yet I am mad enough to love you, to cling to the hope that we may yet be all in all to each other; but in accomplishing that, the girl who has presumed to rival me but for an hour, must become the sacrifice. She shall not live to tell her tale to others."

"Inez—darling!—listen to me, and abate your violence, I entreat you," said Clayton, almost beside himself with dread and remorse.

"I will listen to nothing save the history of your connection with this girl. Your manner, your words, convince me that I should have been wise to give heed to the warning sent by Don Alonzo. Tell me the entire truth, or I will summon him hither, proclaim the fraud of which I have been made the victim, and prove to you how little weight I attach to the mere form of words which bound us together, by marrying him and going with him to Spain."

Though deeply stung by this threat Clayton did not venture to show the resentment he felt. He sullenly said:

"Since you are so anxious for the truth, you shall have it. I believed all to be at an end between us; I buried myself in the deepest solitudes I could find to brood over the thought that to me you were lost forever. I wounded myself accidentally, was found by an old negro, and taken to the cabin of his mistress.

"I found there a young girl, fair, and intelligent enough to become an object of interest to me. I had given you up. I had no hope that I should ever be recalled, and I—I—was united to Bessie Moore by a wandering missionary. The man has gone to the far West, where he will most likely die among the Indians; and there is no legal proof that such a marriage ever took place.

"When your letter came I was thoroughly weary of the good little creature, who, to do her justice, made every effort to please me. But she did not suit me, and in the hour of our parting I fear that I treated her with brutal indifference. I could think only of you, and curse myself for my precipitation.

"I left her, with the determination to force her back into the obscurity from which I had taken her, and I came hither to claim you at the risk of all I hold most precious in life. You have spoken the truth. I am a bigamist; but it was at the dictate of my wild passion for you that I became one. Denounce me, if you will. If I lose you it will matter little what becomes of me."

"And are you equally indifferent to *my* fate, Wilton?" asked the tender tones he had languished for, but had not heard from her lips from the hour of their meeting till this moment. "You have told me all I cared to know, and now I absolve you from the crime you have committed against me. Give me one kiss of reconciliation, and then I will point out to you how you can atone for the wrong you have done me and lawfully make me your wife, for such I am not now by your own confession."

Clayton took her in his arms, and would have kissed her more than once, but she turned her face from him, released herself from his embrace, and gravely said:

"You forget that you have just admitted how slight is the claim you have upon me. I have allowed you to kiss me for the last time till we are a second time united by the laws of your own country. The obstacle between us must be removed. But how? In my anger I threatened violence just now, but I have thought better of that. How will you proceed to free yourself from the tie that is now so hateful to you?"

Clayton gloomily replied:

"If you insist that it is necessary, I must get a divorce, I suppose. Bessie Moore has no friends to espouse her cause, and with the wealth at my command it will not be difficult to set aside such claims as she has upon me. After leaving her as I did, I hardly think she will oppose me."

"Of course it will be necessary to render our union valid. Do you think that I could be induced to live with you as your wife on any other terms? Few women would forgive what you have done, but *I* will do it, because I have learned to my cost that in trifling with you I trifled with my own happiness. I am not bound to you, save through the deep love I cherish for you; but you are bound to me by every consideration that can move a man to prompt action."

"Is that intended as a threat, Inez?"

"You may understand it as such if you choose. Free yourself from this woman, and do it speedily, or accept the consequences that must follow. *I* have friends, if Bessie Moore has none."

"And you will set them on my track—expose me to the penalty I have incurred, only because my love for you is stronger than any feeling I can ever know? Oh, Inez! I have sinned, but *you* are the last one who should threaten me with the consequences of my folly."

"I have no wish to do that. I only point out to you what must inevitably happen if you do not rid yourself of the claims of that girl."

"And you? What will you do? Where will you stay while I am accomplishing that?"

"I will remain here. Among the few who live near us there will doubtless be much gossip about your strange departure; but I shall not permit it to be repeated to me. When you return to me a free man I will accompany you to New York, and there we can be privately re-married."

"Really, you seem to have thought over our anomalous position and settled all your plans before consulting with me," he said, with some bitterness.

"Yes, I have taken a week to think them over, for I had a difficult problem to solve," was the calm reply.

"What was that, may I ask?"

She maliciously replied:

"It was this: Whether I should summon my devoted Spanish adorer and consent to become Duchess D'Olivera—for Don Alonzo is sure to succeed to the family title and estates—or wait till the man I am foolish enough to love can legally ratify the vows he has already plighted to me."

"Have you hesitated a whole week before you could make up your mind?" he asked, with ill-repressed fury. "Was your desire to become a duchess weighed for days against your preference for me?"

"Well, if it was so, you have reason to be satisfied with the result, since I elected to save you from the consequences of your own acts. I beg that you will not undervalue the position I have sacrificed, only because I found it impossible to give you up."

Her eyes were lifted tenderly to his, and she held out her hand as she ceased speaking. Clayton clasped it fervently in his own and hoarsely said:

"How can I bear to leave you now? Oh, Inez! come with me, give no cause for idle tongues to prate about our relations toward each other. I will be true to you, I swear it by all my hopes of happiness on earth. We will go to New York as you propose; I will leave you there, and return to Esperanza to rid myself of the obstacle to a complete union between us. When that is done I will fly on the wings of love to claim my bride."

Inez reflected a few moments, and then said:

"Perhaps that will be best, after all. Juanita must be my companion, and the day we reach that city, you shall find a quiet boarding-house for me on the Hudson. In warm weather I must have flowers and trees around me. I should suffocate among crowded rows of houses. As soon as I am settled you must leave us, and I will await your return as patiently as I can."

"Thanks for that concession, my own—own love. I am more grateful for all your goodness, your forbearance, than words may express."

Inez arose, and briefly said:

"We have settled all that is necessary, I think, so now good-night," and before he could attempt to detain her she was gone.

CHAPTER VII.

RISING CLOUDS.

Inez returned to her own apartment triumphant. She had held her imperious temper under control, except in one brief moment when her deep rancor against Bessie had betrayed her into uttering a threat against her life.

She had retracted it to deceive Clayton as to her purpose; but she fully meant what she had said—that the unhappy child must become a sacrifice to her jealousy.

During the interview Juanita had been placed as a sentinel in the hall, though far enough away to prevent her from overhearing what passed between the lovers. She silently followed her young lady to her room, and closing the door, asked with some eagerness:

"Have you brought him to confession, Donna? The trick he has played on you is so shameful, that, were I in your place, I would send him adrift and find somebody else to console me."

"I dare say," replied Inez, with a touch of sarcasm in her voice; "but, then, you and I are very different beings, Nita. You never admired Mr. Clayton, and I adore him, in spite of the wrong he has done me. Yet I tempted him to it, for I knew before they were uttered how flimsy were the vows we spoke before the priest."

"*Sancta Maria!* then how came you to place yourself in so false a position? Here you are with a husband, who is no husband, and you the fairest lady in all the land."

Inez turned to a mirror and critically surveyed herself. She smiled and said:

"I believe my lover fully indorses your opinion of my attractions, Nita. The man was mad for me, or he would never have risked what he has, to gain so poor a claim upon my hand. You ask me how I came to place myself in so awkward a position? Because I have set my heart on him and I intend to remove the obstacle between us without shrinking—without remorse."

"Donna, darling, what can you mean? Let the girl go; Mr. Clayton can settle her claims on him in such a way that they will never interfere with you."

"He has pledged himself to do that; but—but—I shall never feel that Wilton is all my own while that girl lives. The insult she has put upon me must be atoned in her blood. She shall never have the power to proclaim to the world that she once stood in the position of wedded wife to the man I love."

The self-control she had hitherto maintained forsook her, and she stood white, panting, terrible in her jealous rage. She furiously went on:

"I could drive a dagger to her heart with my own hand when I think of all she has made me suffer. I have maintained outward calmness, but in the past three weeks I have borne tortures as great as any depicted by Dante. Do you think I will forget or forgive her who caused them?"

"But, Donna, what can you do?" asked the woman, in tremulous tones. "She is so far away that you cannot reach her and any attempt to injure her must recoil upon yourself."

"I am not afraid, and with your assistance I can do a great deal."

"You must not count on me, for I will not help you to ruin yourself."

"It will be ruin—madness—*death* to me if I cannot put that creature forever out of my path! The world is not wide enough to hold us both, I tell you, and I *demand* your aid. Its price shall be freedom and money enough to live in comfort all the rest of your life."

Juanita shook her head.

"If I was free this hour I wouldn't leave you, Donna. I couldn't live away from you, and with you I am sure to get all I want. You are wild now, my pet, but you'll think better of this and let Mr. Clayton get out of the difficulty he has plunged himself into the best way he can."

"Oh, yes; by appealing to the law, I suppose," said Inez, scornfully. "You would have me wait and eat my heart out with jealous pangs while he seeks a divorce from my rival. I refuse to do it. I will take my cause in my own hand and remove the obstacle to my happiness. If you refuse your assistance I will do it alone. But mark me, I will leave you here; I will order you to be sold to the highest bidder in the slave market if you persist in your refusal to give me such aid as I shall require at your hands."

Juanita's yellow complexion faded to a dull hue as she listened to this threat. She brokenly said:

"I did not think such words could ever be spoken to me by *you*, Donna. I have been as a mother to you; I have educated myself that I might be in some so[illegible]panion for you. I shut myself up in the co[illegible] while you were getting your edu[illegible] and the good nuns taught me much while I was there. Among other things I learned to believe it wrong to take human life under any provocation."

"There are some injuries that justify even that," replied Inez, defiantly. "You will help me or not, as you may choose. As to myself my course is determined on. I have given you my confidence and I have no fears that you will betray it, for in spite of your present conduct I know that you are too much devoted to me to do that."

"You are quite right, Donna. I could not bring ruin and disgrace upon the child I love," said the woman, in a low tone. She turned away from the gleaming eyes fixed steadily upon her, and went to a distant window, through which she gazed many moments in silence, a fierce struggle apparently passing in her mind.

Inez threw herself upon a chair and impatiently tapped her foot upon the floor, roused to deep anger by the unexpected opposition she had met. Juanita at length approached her and deprecatingly said:

"I—I entreat your pardon, Donna, for setting myself up in opposition to you. No good can come to either of us by my refusal to do your bidding. I am your slave; born to serve you, and willing to do it through my great love for you. Tell me your plans, and if I think they can be carried out with safety to *you* I will no longer refuse the assistance you require."

"Ah-h! so a little reflection has brought you to your right senses," said Inez, in a hard tone. "I am very fond of you, Juanita, but I do not choose to be thwarted by you, especially in a matter so vital to me as this. Have you made up your mind to help me in any way I may demand?"

"I will do the best I can to serve you and save you from the consequences of your own recklessness. If this thing is to be done, let *me* act for you in such a way that no blame can rest on you."

"We will think about that and settle it when the time for action comes. Just now, I hate that girl to such a degree that it seems to me I can only be satisfied by avenging myself upon her with my own hand."

"I hope you'll think better of that, Donna. But tell me what you intend to do—what course you will take to get within reach of the girl?"

"I have consented to accompany Mr. Clayton to New York, with you as my guard and constant companion. He will get country lodgings for us and then go to South Carolina to seek the means of freeing himself from his incumbrance. We will disguise ourselves and follow him closely. Once near my rival, I shall be able to find means to reach her, be sure of that."

The woman bent her head submissively.

"It is a dangerous enterprise, but you seem so determined that I have nothing more to say against it. I promise to stand by you, let what will happen."

"Now you are my own dear, darling old nurse again," said Inez, with a sudden change of manner. "I knew that you could never leave me to my own devices, when I am in such a strait as this. Forget what I said just now in my passion, for you know that I could never consent to give you over to another owner, even if you had refused the service I asked."

"I know that you often say things that you do not quite mean, Donna. I believe we understand each other now, and I promise that I will say nothing more to anger you. I will prove my fidelity to you by doing all that is possible to serve you in the way you ask, and to save you from suspicion after your will is accomplished. It grows late. Had you not better retire, for if I understand you rightly, we are to leave this place without delay."

"Yes—we shall leave to-morrow. I must lie down and rest, I suppose, but I shall not sleep. I am too much excited for that. You will pack such things only as are necessary for us both, and the overseer will be left in charge of the place. Since it belongs to me, there will be no law business to settle before we go."

An hour later, Inez was sleeping soundly, in spite of her prediction to the contrary. Exhausted by the long-continued conflict in her own mind, when once her evil plans were settled, and her ally secured, she reposed as calmly as a tired child, and did not even dream of the crime she had avowed her determination to perpetrate.

Juanita, full of troubled thought, could not sleep for many hours; as to Clayton, he spent the greater part of the night in wandering restlessly through the extensive grounds around the villa; as day was breaking he went back to his own room, threw himself upon his bed without undressing, and sank into the leaden slumber produced by physical fatigue.

He was as miserable as weak men usually are under difficulties, and his were of a character that might have appalled a stouter heart than that which beat in his bosom.

Inez was only his in name; he had placed himself at her mercy, and but for the love she bore him, she would proclaim his dishonorable conduct, and invoke on him the punishment he felt he merited.

On his way to her, he had settled the programme he would carry out; he would go to Europe with his bride, write back to Bessie, appealing to her to spare him a contest which would be useless, and offer her a large sum as compensation for the evil he had wrought her.

But this plan was defeated by the knowledge Inez had obtained, and now his only hope of preventing a great scandal was, that Bessie would surrender her claims upon him without a struggle, when she knew that he had never loved her.

It was late when he descended to find that active preparations for departure were going on. Juanita gave the orders of her mistress, and they were carried into effect without question by servants who were accustomed to implicit obedience.

When Clayton went out from his late breakfast, he found Juanita waiting him near the door. She bowed respectfully, and said:

"My young lady is in the sitting-room with Dr. Levas, and she bade me tell you, sir, that he wishes to bid you good-by."

Clayton crossed the hall, and entered the small apartment in which the interview of the preceding night had taken place. He found Inez in a travelling dress, with a heavy black vail thrown over her head, which partly concealed her features. She was speaking earnestly to the old physician, and he heard her say:

"Yes—our departure is sudden, but important business summons Mr. Clayton to his own country, and, of course, I cannot suffer him to go alone."

"Of course not; but he said nothing to me yesterday about taking you away so soon. Ah! here he is to answer for himself. My dear boy, you look as if you have passed through a serious illness since yesterday. What is the matter? No bad news, I hope, from your own home."

"Thank you; nothing that cannot be arranged, and speedily too, I trust. Do I really look so bad?" and he tried to laugh naturally, as he glanced furtively at the calm face of Inez.

"It is no laughing matter, I assure you," was the grave response, "for you look fitter for your bed than for a long journey. What have you been doing to yourself? I hope that you and the madam have not been having a flare-up before the honeymoon is half over. You look as woebegone as if some such thing had happened."

"No, indeed," said Inez, promptly. "We have never understood each other so well as we do now. How cynical of you, Dr. Levas, to suppose that we have quarrelled already."

Clayton recovered from his momentary embarrassment, parried the questions of the physician, and declared himself quite well enough to undertake a journey around the world.

"Well—well," was the half testy reply, "you have not consulted me, and I have no right to give an opinion; but something is very much amiss with you, and you had better stay where you are till it is set right. Inez is a capital nurse, and between us we'll have you quite well in a few days."

"Your advice does not tally with that you gave me last evening. You advised me then to get away from this climate as soon as possible; and I am certain myself that my only salvation is to go back to my native land without delay."

The doctor shrugged his shoulders.

"You speak strangely; I see there is no hope that my warning will be attended to, for Mrs. Clayton will not raise her voice in aid of my efforts to induce you to take some care of yourself."

Inez started at hearing this name given to her for the first time, and her lips slightly curled, but she controlled the bitter impulse, and quietly replied:

"I did not speak, because I understand the necessity of Mr. Clayton's immediate return to his own country. Affairs of importance are weighing on his mind which will not only make him ill, but keep him so if they are not promptly settled."

"Yes—I must go; there is no doubt of that," said Clayton, with feverish eagerness. "It is useless to talk, Doctor, for something more precious than life is at stake, and go I must, if I die on the way."

Dr. Levas peered at him gravely through his spectacles, seeming much perplexed by his imprudent words, and Inez bit her lip with vexation.

The old man said with extreme gravity:

"In that case, I can say no more. I shall miss my young friend here very much, for she has been almost as a daughter to me; but I must console myself for her loss by the hope that with you she will be safe and happy."

Clayton's eyes glared on him a moment as if [illegible] some latent meaning in his words, and Inez hastened to say:

"You need have no fears for me, my dear old friend. Leave us to settle our affairs in our own way, and we shall do well enough."

"I hope so," was the cold reply. "I did not intend to interfere in any way, Mrs. Clayton. I will now bid you both good-bye, hoping that my prognostic of approaching illness for Mr. Clayton may not be verified."

He shook hands with Clayton, kissed the one Inez extended to him, and left the house vaguely impressed with the fact that something had already produced an estrangement between the newly married pair.

Left alone with Clayton, Inez anxiously regarded him, and earnestly said:

"You are looking very ill indeed, Wilton. If so much were not at stake, I should have agreed with Dr. Levas that you must rest, and take care of yourself."

"I have no time to be ill," he gloomily replied. "Nor will I permit myself to become so. For a whole week I have suffered the tortures of the Inferno, and that is why I look so wretchedly. I have no physical ailment—mental anguish has broken me down in this pitiful manner."

Inez came near him, laid her hand caressingly upon his arm, and gazing tenderly in his eyes, said:

"And I, too, have suffered, Wilton. It was a bitter blow to me to learn that, even for an hour, another woman had been looked on by you with favorable eyes. How perfect was my trust in you was proved by the unshrinking confidence with which I placed my hand in yours beside my dying father's bed. Do I not still prove my faith in your honor by going forth with you, the world believing me your wife, when I know that I do not really hold that relation to you?"

"Yes—yes—your are an angel, Inez, and I am a wretch to have placed you in so equivocal a position. You have forgiven me the wrong, and I must hasten to atone for it in the best way I can. Oh, dearest! how great must have been the love which could condone such an offence as mine!"

"It is not *yet* forgiven quite," she replied, with a lightning flash from her opaline eyes. "When no obstacle is between us, when we can legally exchange vows of devotion, *then* you will learn how fondly, how faithfully I can love. *Now* we are only friends, and love passages must cease between us till you can come to me and say you are free."

"It shall not be long before I will be able to say that. My generous darling, your faith in me shall meet its reward. To-day we leave; a week hence we may be in New York, and once in my native land, the rest will be easy."

"Yes, it will be easy enough to deal with the low-born, penniless creature, who will not understand or be able to defend her rights. If I did not hate her, I could pity her for her helplessness. But feeling toward her as I do, I could and would crush her as one destroys a venomous reptile that threatens to sting one to death."

She was white with sudden passion, but she regained self-control as rapidly as she had lost it, and, with a hysterical laugh, went on:

"I am a fool to talk in this way, but my heart is very bitter toward my temporary rival. *You* will do all the crushing that is necessary, without giving me a chance to wreak my vengeance upon one I should not fear, since she has no power over your heart."

"That is yours alone, as no one can know as well as yourself, Inez," he gently said, for her angry vehemence alarmed him. "Of course, it is I alone who must seek Bessie and induce her to resign all claims upon the position which you have the best right to as the chosen of my heart. When she is made to understand that, there will be little difficulty in procuring a secret and speedy divorce. In some of the States such a thing can be accomplished readily enough."

"I dare say. But have you never thought of a more secret and certain way of releasing yourself?"

Her tone was even more significant than her words, and Clayton, startled into sudden consciousness of her meaning, exclaimed:

"God forbid! Such a temptation as that has never come to me. Why should it, when I can so easily rid myself of her claims upon me?"

"I hope you may find it easy; that is all," said Inez, coldly. "As to me, if I were a man, and had run my head into a noose I could not readily untie, I should *cut it* without compunction."

She glided away, leaving him half paralyzed by her words, and after giving her orders to have everything in readiness for their departure early in the afternoon, went out to take leave of her pets, and give a last look at the beautiful grounds she might never visit again.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

◆

—Happiness is always a home-made article.

GEORGIE'S STROKE OF FORTUNE.

"Hey! Johnny!"

Like a shot the newsboy flew across the street in answer to the hail, distancing two competitors after an even start.

"Let's have the Evening ———."

Georgie Allston, who had answered so promptly to the name of Johnny,—indeed, so many people called him by it that it seemed almost as familiar as his own,—handed the gentleman the paper, the last of his pack, and stood waiting for his pay.

"Have you change for a quarter?" asked the fashionably dressed customer, with a wink at his equally stylish companion.

"Yes, sir," replied Georgie, whipping the proffered coin between his teeth, and diving his chubby fist, all red and blue with cold, into the pocket of his patched trousers and pulling out a handful of pennies, with here and there a "nickel" among them, he selected four of the latter and three pennies which he handed to the stranger, and with a light heart and a light pair of heels set off at a run, glad that his day's work was over.

"You don't mean to say you stuck the boy with that odd-looking coin the bar-keeper refused to take where we had the last Santa Cruzes?" queried one of the two dandies.

"I told you I'd get it off," returned the other, with a laugh; "people aren't all as sharp as bar-keepers."

"But few are sharper than a New York newsboy. I wonder the little Arab didn't tip his nose to you or pull down his right under eyelid."

"Oh! *he'll* come out all right the first time he makes change for a rural purchaser of a last week's morning *Herald* for the latest *extree* with 'all about the Czar's last toothache.'"

And, with another laugh, the pair turned into a gayly lighted "SAMPLE ROOM" in search of another brace of Santa Cruzes.

It was Christmas Eve, and Georgie, who had been all the week assuring Viva, his three-year-old sister, that Santa Claus would be sure to put something nice in her stocking if she was a good girl—a condition which Viva had fulfilled to the letter—made it his first business to take measures to insure the keeping of the promise he had taken the liberty of making in the jolly saint's name.

For several days he had kept an eye on a rosy-cheeked doll in a toy-shop window on his route.

At last he was in a condition to make certain of the prize. The price—he had been careful to ascertain it—was just a dollar; not a very large sum, it is true, but Georgie had to lay by a reserve of capital every evening sufficient to purchase his next day's stock, and it was only by close pinching that he was able to save a dollar from his gains.

His heart sank as he approached the toyman's window. The cruel wolf must have come in his absence. The precious darling was nowhere to be seen. But stay!—what was that just round the corner of a great Noah's ark, placed since morning in the middle of the window? Surely that was the border of her little red hood, and—ah! yes!—there was one of her blue eyes peeping at him as roguishly as if she was challenging him to a game of hide-and-seek.

Georgie walked in briskly and pushed his way to the counter.

"I want to buy that doll in the window—the one in the read cloak and hood," he said to the first salesman he found disengaged, laying down a dollar in change.

Red-Ridinghood was brought from her hiding-place and done up in a neat parcel, which Georgie was carefully buttoning under his jacket, when the salesman, in the act of taking up the money, shoved back one of the pieces.

"What do you call that?" he asked bruskly.

"A quarter," answered Georgie.

"*I* don't."

"Anyhow I took it for one," said the boy.

"Can't help that," replied the man. "Either give me another or return the goods."

"Is it bad?"

"I don't say that—I don't know what it is, and don't want it."

Georgie hesitated a moment. Another quarter would break in on his reserve, and utterly derange his next day's business. With a sigh that was almost a sob, and forcing back the tears that nearly came in spite of him, he handed back the parcel, took up his money, and left the shop, not venturing to look back as he passed the window outside.

Suddenly it flashed upon him that he had that day seen in a window a number of queerly bound old books with quaint pictures in them, and a number of battered and rusty coins on a shelf, while a placard on one of the panes announced:

"OLD BOOKS AND COINS BOUGHT HERE."

"Maybe I can get something for it there," thought Georgie; "it looks at least as well as most of those already in the window."

Acting on the impulse, he hastened to the place, which was fortunately still open.

"How much will you give for that?" he inquired of a man behind a desk, laying down the piece and waiting anxiously the answer.

"I took it for a quarter," he hastened to add, as if that were some proof of value.

"I'll give you another for it," said the man, carelessly, after a brief examination.

Georgie's heart leaped to his throat. He would have closed with the offer at once, that he might lose no time in hurrying back to the toy-shop, but his eagerness, for the moment, left him without speech.

"Let *me* see it?" said a kindly-faced, little old gentleman, with white hair and gold spectacles, looking up from one of the quaint books which he had been glancing over.

With no great alacrity the man at the desk complied.

The little old gentleman turned the piece over in his fingers several times, scrutinizing it carefully. Then he took off his spectacles, and screwed a curious-looking glass, with an ivory rim, into one eye, and made another inspection.

Having satisfied himself apparently, he removed the glass and replaced his spectacles.

"*I'll give you fifty dollars for it,*" he said, turning to Georgie.

The latter looked at the little gentleman with amazement. He had never heard of "Clinton cents" worth a hundred dollars, and bits of dingy copper, bearing Cæsar's "image and superscription," fetching many times as much.

"It's a coin of Henry the Seventh's time," said the old gentleman—"not especially rare, but fairly worth what I have offered."

"Maybe this gentleman will give more," he added, with a motion of the head toward the man at the desk, as he noticed the boy's indecision.

"No, you have tendered the full value," replied the man thus appealed to, looking a little ashamed of his own recent offer.

Georgie no longer hesitated. The little old gentleman was evidently in his senses, and knew what he was doing. The bargain was briefly concluded, and Georgie became the happy possessor of five crisp ten-dollar notes.

The widow Allston's heart felt heavier than usual that day. She had always been able to have a Christmas turkey before. But times had gone hard of late, and the man for whom she made vests had cut down the price so low that the turkey would have to be dispensed with.

It was hardly light enough to see next morning, when Viva wakened with a start, and ran to where she had hung her stocking from the corner of the stove for want of a chimney-corner.

What a scream of delight she gave as she saw the little red hood, and under it a pair of laughing blue eyes peeping at her archly over the border of her stocking.

In an instant the precious treasure was in her arms.

"Oh! Georgie! Georgie!" she cried, running to wake her brother from his pretended sleep. "Just see what Santo C'aus broughted me! It's 'ittle Yed-Yidin'hood, an' I 'spect he's killed ze ugly old wolf!"

Dinner or no dinner, Viva was supplied with happiness for *that* day.

An equal surprise was in store for the widow. A man with a handcart came to the door and inquired for Mrs. Allston.

"Here are some things I have brought," he said.

The widow started back, astonished. There were meat and game and vegetables, and, towering above all, *such* a turkey!

"Th—there must be some mistake," the widow stammered.

"There is no mistake," said the man, beginning to unload.

"God bless the generous giver!" exclaimed the widow, from the fullness of her heart.

Georgie's eyes glistened. He could hardly refrain from throwing his arms about her neck and telling all. But he had further plans yet.

There was happiness in that humble household that day. At its close the widow retired to rest with a heart filled with thankfulness, and Viva fell asleep with Red Ridinghood in her arms.

"Mother," said Georgie, as they sat at supper the next evening, "you mustn't work so hard any more."

"I don't mind work," she said, with the cheerful look she always tried to keep for her children, "and we must do our best to get along."

"But you needn't work *so hard* now," persisted Georgie. "I bought out a news-stand to-day, with a stove in it, and a nice stock of magazines and periodicals, and having a fine run of custom."

The widow stared in speechless astonishment.

Then Georgie told the secret he had been burning to disclose, and there was another happy evening under the widow's roof.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEB. 16, 1884.

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FOR THE NEW YEAR 1884.

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Brilliant Weddings.

No weddings attract more attention from the newspapers than those in which the bridegroom is a military or naval officer. Such weddings are usually brilliant, indeed. The happy man is in full regulation uniform. Some of his fellow-officers, also glittering in gold, are sure to be among the groomsmen or ushers. For most persons a uniform is far more becoming than the claw-hammer dress coat which fashion prescribes for civilians; and an entertainment in which officers of the army and navy in full dress form a conspicuous element is always particularly attractive to the ladies.

Probably it is not too much to say also that many a bride has been won by a young fellow who would hardly have been successful in his suit if she had never seen him in his uniform. Fine feathers make fine birds, even among men and women. But let the girls choose carefully. See to it that your chosen mate has the sturdy heart of the game fowl beneath his fine plumage, and not merely the vain soul of the peacock.

Careless Girls.

Girls will be girls. Even General WASHINGTON found it so. In a letter of his, recently published for the first time, we observe him writing about his niece in terms which would apply equally well to many young ladies of the present day:

> "Harriet has sense enough," he tells his sister, Mrs. Betty Lewis, "but no disposition to industry, nor to be careful of her cloathes. Your example and admonition may, with proper restraints, overcome the two last. And to that end I wish you would examine her cloathes and direct her in the use and application of them—for without this they will be (I am told) dabbed about in every hole and corner, and her best things always in use."

Mrs. LEWIS's reply has an equally familiar sound. She records HARRIET's improvement, but goes on to lament the exactions of city life, which require the frequent renewal of garments that in a country place can be "wore to the last string." Indeed, these two letters, written before the battle of Bunker Hill, might seem to have been posted but yesterday at a corner letter-box, were it not for their dates and the redundant *a* with which the Father of his Country expands that only too expansive word, *cloathes*.

Heroism in Common Life.

It is creditable to human nature that many men display in the ordinary walks of life the most brilliant courage and the most noble fortitude. Hardly a day passes in which some honest brakeman, switch-tender, engineer or conductor does not by his nerve or presence of mind save a train from a disaster that would carry desolation into a hundred happy homes. Often this service is rendered by the sacrifice of a valuable life. How often we read of such heroic conduct as that of Mr. JOHN BULL, of Akron, Ohio, who saved his passengers the other day by calmly and courageously standing to his post.

> "He could have saved himself by jumping, but thought of the passengers, reversed his engine, and set the air-brakes. He then put on full steam, and started the engine ahead. It broke loose from the cars, and the passengers were saved."

He saved his passengers, but the released engine bore *him* to agony and death.

Brave fellow!

Not Such a Fool After All.

Mr. OSCAR WILDE, in a lecture which he delivered after his return from America, said:

> "My hearers may ask me, in what does the greatness of America really consist? I answer: The young people are brought up in a country where no one is debarred from reaching the highest office, without regard to birth or parentage. They can point to some of the best and purest minded men the world has ever seen—men who sprang from the people. This gives the people a splendid ambition in life—one of America's chief characteristics. Every boy knows that when he grows to man's estate he will be accounted worthy of having a voice in the making of those laws that he is called upon to obey. The privileges of the franchise are granted, not for any question of property, domicile, or the like, but merely for *the dignity of manhood.* I cannot but think that when one leaves America he has *a better knowledge of the meaning of the word freedom, and the value of the thing liberty.*"

These words breathe the true American spirit, and are most creditable to the head and heart of the man who uttered them. They show that, after all, OSCAR WILDE is not altogether the fool that he has been represented to be.

A Word About Brides, Diamonds and Cookery.

The morning papers in this city recently contained notices of four or five brilliant weddings, and also a report of a lecture on cookery, in the course of which the fair lecturer put her precepts into practice by showing "how to cook meat hash, fish hash, fish-balls, buckwheat cakes and muffins."

In the report of the weddings, it is stated that one of the brides "wore white satin with point lace trimmings and lily of the valley fringe. A vail of tulle was caught with orange flowers and diamonds." Another, who is described as a young blonde of unusual beauty, wore ornaments of diamonds and carried a bouquet of "white rosebuds, lilies of the valley, white hyacinths, and maiden-hair fern." Still another, clad in point-lace and diamonds, was accompanied by bridesmaids in Kate Greenaway costumes with poke bonnets.

All brides look handsome. From their appearance or their dress you can predict very little as to their future. But diamonds do not tell much about the fair wearer. Skill in cookery is a better test of her ability as a housekeeper. If we knew which one, if any, of these brides could already cook "meat hash, fish hash, fish balls, buckwheat cakes and muffins," after the most approved style, we should forecast favorable fortunes indeed for her household. She will, at any rate, know how to have the cooking done, even though she may seldom have occasion to go into the kitchen herself.

But no matter how many diamonds she has, a woman who knows nothing about cookery is not fit to be the head of a family, rich or poor, in this country.

Distinguished Woodchoppers.

The seventy-fourth anniversary of the birthday of Mr. GLADSTONE, the Prime Minister of England, was recently celebrated at his country residence. He spent a part of the day in cutting down trees in the park, being assisted by his son, HERBERT. A deputation of gentlemen who called in the afternoon found father and son hard at work felling a large tree, and many of the visitors took away chips as mementoes of the scene.

Here in America, where so much of the business of life has consisted in clearing away the forests, we might naturally suppose that wood-chopping would suggest itself to rich men in search of that health which can only be obtained and preserved by more or less bodily exertion. Yet we can recall no person of prominence in this country except HORACE GREELEY who has ever felled trees for recreation. He used to go up to his farm in Westchester county on Saturdays and chop down as many as he could.

No doubt many city men would find much benefit in following the example of Mr. GREELEY and Mr. GLADSTONE.

What He Saw in His Lifetime.

The late ANTHONY J. BLEEKER, who died some days ago at the age of eighty-five, was an eye-witness of the growth of New York from a town of forty thousand inhabitants to a metropolis approaching two millions. The farm-house in which he was born stood on the site of the New York Hotel, which we now speak of as "down town." As a boy he swam in the water which gave name to Canal Street, and as late as 1836 he declined to take for a debt some lots near the South Ferry at a valuation of two hundred and fifty dollars each. As an auctioneer he sold lots for seven hundred dollars which cannot be bought to-day for a hundred thousand. He saw the centre of fashion change six times in the course of his life. When he was born, one small cart carried the mails of New York from the post office to the starting places of coaches and vessels. He lived to see the same post office handle two millions and a half of letters and papers every twenty-four hours, and do a business in postal orders and stamps amounting to nearly one hundred million dollars a year.

To Marry or Not to Marry.

The late THERON R. BUTLER, President of the Sixth Avenue Railroad, was a good man and in every way an excellent citizen; but one clause in his will, which has just been published, has been sharply criticised. It appears that he left $15,000 a year to his wife, so long as she remains unmarried; but, in case she marries again, she is to get only $7,500 a year. Isn't this too much like offering a premium to his wife to remain single? Besides, what must have been the lady's feelings when she saw this clause of her husband's will published in all the newspapers?

Such delicate matters should not be made subjects of record and publicity, as they of course must be when incorporated in a will, but should be left to the judgment and good faith of the survivor.

If anything would provoke a widow to marry again, would not such a restriction as the one above mentioned have that tendency, by constantly keeping the idea of marriage before her mind, and impressing upon her the fact that her husband thought of it when he was making his will?

Uncharitable and Unjust.

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian says:

> "Those who are always raising these questions about dancing, card-playing and theatre-going, are very low down in the scale of Christian attainment."

Don't be so hasty; and what is still more important, don't be so uncharitable and so unjust. There are many excellent young ladies and gentlemen who dance, many good people who play cards for amusement, and some prominent clergymen who justify theatre-going. Are they all "low down in the scale of Christian attainment?"

We think not—certainly not in the case of one leading Presbyterian clergyman who is a Professor in a Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and engaged in training young men for the ministry.

Do not misunderstand us. We are no advocate of these amusements. The editor of the *Ledger* does not know how to dance, never played a game of cards in his life, and does not attend the theatre; but he hates with perfect hatred everything that is uncharitable and unjust.

What Becomes of the Little Ones.

When our magistrates sentence the father of a family to six months upon "the Island," or seven years in Sing-Sing, what becomes of the family? This question has been recently investigated by one who reports that, when the mother cannot support the children, they are frequently "adopted" by poor neighbors scarcely able to feed their own. This shows how much real practical benevolence there is among the very poor. Still the poor little ones are to be pitied.

"DINING OUT."

BY REV. JOHN HALL, D. D., N. Y.

It is desirable, on the whole, for a man in fair circumstances to have a "dress-coat," *i. e.*, a coat cut away at the sides below the waist, such as has long been worn by well-to-do waiters, (though why that should be "dress" it would require a "higher critic" to settle,) but it ought to last one for many years. It ought to be laid away in camphor for all the summer, and ought not to be on duty more than once a week during the winter. After eight or nine years it is just possible that—partly from not using it too much—a healthy development of the body may make a change necessary, but in the absence of such, the dress-coat should do for a decade.

Why? When you have a view to present, which some unreflecting one may question, it is a good thing to have "one of the ancients" to back it up. Here, then, is Pliny with the verdict, "Simple diet is best, for many dishes bring many diseases, and rich sauces are worse than even heaping several meats upon each other." But the dress coat implies dining out, and the "dining out" implies what Pliny deprecates. It is possible, indeed, that cooks are better or men wiser than in Pliny's days; but—apart from this—dining out implies a great addition to the sum of human anxieties. But the burden of them is already large enough from nature. Why make it heavier by social usage?

To begin with, the entertainer has a host of cares as to the parties to be asked. Can you invite the Joneses and leave out the Smiths? and if the Smiths, how many of them? They are a formidable family. You would like the Browns; but would they like to meet the Smiths? Was there not some talk of young Brown dropping Miss Smith after a good deal of attention to her? This matter settled, how many are you to have? Here the size of the table and a host of minor circumstances must be taken into account. Then how to sort the guests, ladies enough for the gentlemen, no odd number, and not thirteen! Then comes up the question: how to ask them? By a call? or a note? or a card? Then, how is the note to be worded? or the card engraved? Is it to be in one envelope or two? And what style is in good form? Family consultations settle these points. But does this settle all?

By no means. The real cares begin here. Here is the view of a poet:

> "We may live without poetry, music and art;
> We may live without conscience, and live without heart:
> We may live without friends; we may live without books;
> But civilized man cannot live without cooks."

True; and many a lady finds it hard to live *with* them; but the cook, the dishes, their order, their cost, the attendants, and the time—all must be settled—for this is to be

> "A solemn sacrifice, performed in state,
> You drink by measure, and to minutes eat."

Does the actual order for dinner end all? Far from it. The flowers, a bit of a bouquet for each dress-coat's button-hole, a bigger one for each lady to bear home, and an enormous block for the centre of the table—not to speak of the inherently coarse ostentation of gifts to be carried away—all these have to be secured. Then, a card for the plate of each; and be sure the names are right. Think of putting "Mr. Bummer" on a card, when "The Hon. Jeremiah Bummer" is the correct thing! Why, madam, don't you know that the Hon. Jeremiah was in the Legislature of Wisconsin before the war?

Now, is all settled? By no means. What dress are you to wear, madam? And your daughters? and are they all to come to table? Of the minor mysteries of what the non-diners are to do, we say noting. Nor do we dwell on the corresponding solicitudes among the Browns, Smiths, and Bummers as to how they shall dress, go and return, and the careful rehearsal of the formula by the Honorable Jeremiah, "Good-night, madam; I have had a most delightful evening, and I ap-preciate your kindness."

There are many pleasant "dinner parties," where simplicity, in[illegible] and intelligence inspiring social [illegible] the evening pleasant and restful, where no great solicitude precedes, where no studied imitations of outside ways embarrass, and no vexatious reminiscences follow, where all feel like the English farmer who liked to go to church because he "sat still and thought about nothing;" but in view of the studied, labored, artificial collections of people to dine "in French," the word "entertainment" is a misnomer, and if I were obliged to submit to them I would be apt to say, after the mode of the country mouse:

> "Give me again my hollow tree,
> A crust of bread, and liberty."

"There, now, you are getting morbid. This is another piece of your annoyance over American citizens sinking their 'plain living and high thinking' in petty imitation of other lands and other nationalities."

Well, if I am morbid, it is in good company. I remember how Horace—who was not a minister, nor even a Christian, but a man of "culture" among the Roman "Philistines"—describes Grecian decay. Here is the fine old heathen's idea in easier language than he first used to me: "When Greeks put wars aside they took to trifles; and as fortune smiled, sank into luxury; then did they burn with passion for athletic games or equestrian races; or admired sculpture in marble, ivory and bronze; or with eyes and souls hung enraptured on pictures; or delighted to listen to players on the flute, and tragic actors; like an infant girl at play under its nurse's care, what eagerly it loved, that soon it, sated, left." Nineteen hundred years ago Horace wrote that bit of "morbid" description. In the same mood, probably, he gave a rule of life to a certain class, which, without knowing it, our well-to-do folks are working out: "Go now, adore old plate and sculptured marble, and vessels of bronze and works of art; wonder at the hues of Tyrian purple and gems withal; rejoice because a thousand eyes gaze on you as you speak."

The gentle sway of French cooks had not begun when Horace wrote, but they had their representatives in his day, and here is his reflection on the abject bondage of wealthy Romans to their edicts: "And now, if any one issued an edict that roasted seagulls were delicious, the Roman youths, apt pupils in depravity, would yield obedience."

My reader, you do not live in rich, fashionable, "cultured" New York city. You study its glories from afar as depicted in dazzling colors in the social sides of your papers. You gaze, and admire and envy. You wonder if, by quitting the homely farm or the honest grocery, and plunging into "stocks and bonds," you might not get into this Elysium of dinners, balls, and shows. Let me advise you to stay where you are:

> "God made the country, and man made the town."

And if it seems to you that your cares are many, and would disappear if you could only eat of every tree in this paradise, be assured that the change would alter the kind, but increase the weight, of the cares. You can, to be sure, create them for yourself, if in your pretty village you become a petty imitator of New York, as New York is of older capitals. Do not make this mistake. Keep your simplicity. Keep out of rivalry, display, and social ambitions. Take, with a little change, the assurance of the poet:

> "Oh! better by far is a dinner of herbs,
> When seasoned by love, which no rancor disturbs,
> And sweetened by all that is sweetest in life,
> Than turbot, game, terrapin, eaten in strife."

And when you come to New York do not hang about the edges of the "fashionable world," and exhaust your store of eulogy on any scraps that are thrown to you. Respect yourselves and your better ways. You have heard, perhaps, of one of the innumerable children of genius Hibernia has produced, being entertained in the town-house of an acquaintance, who apologized profusely for the plainness of the fare, there being nothing for dinner but potatoes and beef. "Don't say a word about it, Barney; it's jist my own dinner at home—barrin' the beef."

"There Was No Fraud."

There is an impression abroad that the bridge which connects New York and Brooklyn need not have cost us fifteen millions of dollars, or more than twice as much as the Erie Canal. Mr. W. P. SHEARMAN says the impression is erroneous. "There was no fraud" in its construction he reports. This is comforting. We are assured, however, that there are competent engineers among us who would gladly undertake to duplicate the bridge at a great reduction. Within twenty-five years there will probably be two or three bridges over our rivers here. Will they cost fifteen millions each?

"NATURE ABHORS A VACUUM."

BY BISHOP CLARK, OF RHODE ISLAND.

For want of any better explanation of certain familiar phenomena of nature this phrase was invented, and until the reign of science began it was regarded as sufficiently satisfactory. After the famous experiment with a column of mercury in the Torricellian tube had proved that the fluid would sink at a certain height, the old idea was exploded by the saying, that "Nature abhorred a vacuum, but only as high as thirty degrees," this being the point at which the mercury dropped. Rhetorically, however, it is fair to say that nature does abhor a vacuum. In other words, wherever there is a vacuum it is the tendency of surrounding substances to rush in and fill it. Waterspouts, whirlwinds, hurricanes, tornadoes, and, in fact, all motions in the atmosphere, are attributable to this law.

A perfect vacuum may be defined as a place where nothing exists. This it is very difficult to produce by artificial means; the air-pump cannot do it, neither can it be effected by combustion, as the familiar experiment of burning a piece of paper in a tumbler and placing it with the top downward in a basin of water, clearly shows—the water never rising high enough to fill the tumbler. We come as near as possible to a perfect vacuum in the instance of the Torricellian tube, which, if it is forty inches high when the mercury sinks, will leave a space of ten inches that would seem to be absolutely void. On the same ground it might be said, that outside the earth's atmosphere the space between us and the planets must be a perfect vacuum, and yet scientific men tell us that there is no vacuous region in the universe, and they have given the name of ether to the imponderable substance which fills all space. The existence of such a substance cannot be determined by any such direct tests as those which indicate the presence of electricity, but in order to the propagation of the waves of light and heat and the electric fluid, it is indispensable that there should be some medium for the conveyance of these waves. If this be so, there is no such thing anywhere as "an empty void;" wherever space exists there must be something to fill the space.

Bishop Berkeley asserted that it was not possible to prove the existence of matter at all. We know nothing except the fact that certain impressions are produced upon the mind, such as the sense of color, hardness, extension, and we have no conceptions of anything beyond this. His theory is better than that of our modern materialists, who say that man is nothing but matter, and reduce the spiritual world to a vacuum, for he regarded these mental phases to be just as real as what is called substance.

It may be truly said that nature abhors a mental vacuum; and now, leaving the domain of natural science, I turn to this new aspect of the subject. Whenever we hear a speech or read a book that is void of thought our minds protest against it. Unfortunately we are sometimes liable to this calamity, and feeling that we have lost just so much valuable time, we hold the speaker or the writer responsible for it. To say of a work, "There is nothing in it," or of a man, "There is nothing in him," is the most reproachful thing that can be said. There probably is something in him, although he may be what Carlyle is so fond of calling "a wind-bag;" but there is nothing worth speaking of. And yet such people are apt to do a great deal of talking, as hollow vessels make the most noise. "*Vox et preterea nihil,*" as the Latin puts it—"a voice and nothing more." How much of this sort of thing we have on public occasions, sometimes even in the halls of Congress, and once in a while in the pulpit. On such occasions we wonder whether the man knows that he is saying nothing, and only revealing the fact that his brain is a vacuum. "When thou hast nothing to say, say nothing," is a good rule, but it is not much regarded. It would often appear as if the less men had to say the more they talked. There are persons in private life who are always disposed "to make conversation," as the phrase runs, and they make it out of very slight materials. They beat out a bit of copper until it is as thin as the thinnest gold-leaf, expand a globule into a bubble as big as a balloon; and their talk is a refutation of the natural law, which declares that sound cannot be produced in a vacuum.

If there is no such thing as absolute vacancy in space, there may be something very nearly approaching a vacuum in time. What are called *idle hours* may not be altogether wasted—some of the most agreeable essays in the English tongue have been produced under this title—but there are certain experiences common to us all when we cannot help feeling that our time is wasted. The hours that are spent in *waiting* for anything—for the train to arrive, a dinner to be served, or for a man to keep his appointment, or for "the exercises to begin"—is usually just so much time thrown away. It is very difficult for us to address ourselves to any particular thing, with the consciousness that we are at any moment liable to be interrupted; it is not easy even to fix one's attention upon a book, or to engage in anything like pleasant conversation. The mind never works to advantage when it is in a state of suspense. Some persons waste a great deal of time in deciding when they will come to a decision—in what they call *deliberation*, which is nothing but the play of the two sides of the scale up and down at random. "Would you have a man keep his mind at work all the time? Shall we never rest? Or shall we come to a determination without forethought?" I am not speaking of the repose which follows action; this is a refreshment that we all need; nor of that sort of deliberation which calls our faculties into active play, but of the stupid, inane, indeterminate way in which many people pass a large portion of their lives. "Dost thou love life?" said Franklin; "then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of."

It is a melancholy thing when one's life is reduced to a vacuum, and the hours and days go by leaving no result behind them. Every hour should have some sort of occupation. It is the vacant soil in which poisonous weeds grow; it is the vacant hour that breeds mischief. A young man who is brought up to do nothing generally comes to nothing. In the hour of idleness something will rush in to fill the vacuum, and what that is we too well know. It is better to work with no result than not to work at all. There is rarely any need of this, for good, honest work is almost sure to bring some good result.

I give, in conclusion, Lord Brougham's three rules of living:

"1. To give myself wholly to the present business.

"2. Never to let slip any opportunity of performing business.

"3. Never to intrust anything to another that I can do for myself."

How much he accomplished by observing these rules everybody knows.

Another Yankee Notion Abroad.

The "woman question," which originated here has reached a more advanced stage of progress in Europe than we can claim for it among ourselves. Young ladies pursue their studies at English universities and colleges with less disadvantage than at Harvard or Columbia. The question of female suffrage is, at this moment, almost "an issue" between the tories and the liberals. Lord Hartington said, the other day, that "the exclusion of women from the suffrage was based upon no intelligible principle." To this Lord Randolph Churchill thus replied:

> "The exclusion is based on the principle that a man is a man, and a woman is a woman, and it begins and ends there, without the slighest difficulty or complication of any sort or kind. Suppose that a man were to outrageously insult Lord Hartington, Lord Hartington would in all probability strike him down, and everybody would be delighted. Suppose a woman was to insult Lord Hartington, Lord Hartington would in all probability walk away and avoid that female. But suppose that after this excited female had insulted Lord Hartington anybody was to go up to him and point out to him that his neglect to strike the lady down was based upon no intelligible principle, Lord Hartington would think the remark idiotic, and so it would be."

This is one of the best things on this subject we have ever read. The reasoning is both wise and conclusive.

Young Ladies Always Say "Thank You."

The Philadelphia *Call* says young ladies always say "Thank you," when offered a seat in the street cars, and old maids never do.

BETWEEN THE WATCHES.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

Between the sunset and the night
The surging woodlands rise and fall,
And one fierce flash of lurid light
Strikes up the mighty mountain wall
On crag and summit, sheer and high,
The pines, those runic priests of yore,
Whose towering altars prop the sky,
Mutter their gusty litanies o'er!

With passionate pain I take again
Your letters from their hiding place,
And lift, with hands that tremble, Dayne,
The curtain from your pictured face;
I see you thro' a blur of tears,
Dark, fathomless eyes, that smile in mine,
White brows of genius, where the years
Have written no unseemly line!

O, proud red lips, that breathed one day
The words for which my spirit pined,
Till all the silver flutes of May
Seemed blowing in the southern wind!
Dark locks, whose burnished waves gave back
A warm bronze lustre to the light,
The frosts of twenty years, alack!
Must dull their silken gloss to-night!

Warm heart, that beat so strong and true,
With all the joyous hopes of youth;
Brave, simple soul, that only knew
The golden mean of faith and truth;
In all the world I may not guess
What paths your wandering feet may press;
Beggared by Fate, I only know,
My love, I lost you long ago!

The dying embers on the hearth
Sparkle with sudden angry glow;
The cricket checks her strident mirth,
The curtains waver to and fro!
A vague, chill *something*, shaped of air,
Stirs faintly the dead hush and gloom,
And steals upon me unaware
From shadowy corners of the room!

Hark! how the north wind shrills to-night,
And wails with many a dying fall!
I thrust your letters out of sight,
And turn your picture to the wall;
O, Friend! who coldly went your way
In blind distrust and bitter hate,
God's hand will lift the vail some day,
And you will *know!* For this I wait.

Little Boys.

There must assuredly be some particular good angel who sits upon the lamp-posts to take care of little city boys. Otherwise, rapidly as they appear upon the face of earth, there would be none left over, after a winter's romping in the street, to drown themselves at the docks next summer.

Now, look at them coming out of school! Hood's description of the boys in "Eugene Aram," who were "like troutlets in a pool," is nothing to the actual fact. "*Troutlets,*" indeed! But what they *are* like, I cannot say. I only know that they seem to have a disregard of any possible dislocation of limb or neck, which one could scarcely expect in so many gnomes, and that anything with a life to lose should be so reckless of it is really wonderful.

Just now every boy has a sled, and no boy is content unless he fastens this sled behind some cart or wagon—some sleigh, if possible. There they go!—not neglected children, but mothers' darlings in cloth of the finest and fur of the best—tossed wildly over hummocks of ice, spilled into the frozen gutters, knocked down, set up again, beaten by other boys, whacked at by furious drivers! They have falls that might kill them, and rise laughing. They are apparently immolated under the wheels of ice wagons, and appear at the other end grinning. They fight until their hands and noses are covered with gore, and go to play again immediately.

I saw one youth of five ascend a tin leader to the roof of his parents' house one day, and come down again with a "Whoop-la! Here we are!" from the repertoire of the last circus clown he had admired.

Another habitually swings out on the upper shutter of a four-story house. Once the shutter got fastened back, and it required much engineering to get him off alive; but he was at it again next morning. Another youth sets trains of gunpowder across the cellar of his happy home, and assists the bonfires of the neighborhood with libations from the family kerosene can. So far, he has only lost one thumb and his grand-aunt.

One young but enterprising lad undertook, the other day, to drive a spirited steed attached to a dog-cart, which was waiting at the door for his grown-up brother. The horse was shot, the dog-cart used for kindling wood, and two policemen were carried to the hospital, but the boy returned, with a delighted grin on his countenance, carrying the whip and lap-robe with the air of a conqueror. And the youth who fell from the church steeple round the corner last Sunday, only exhibits a blue bruise on the elbow. The old couple he fell upon were buried yesterday. In fact, I am beginning to regard boys as awful mysteries, with charmed lives, not amenable to any law, even that of gravitation.

M. K D.

IF FRIENDS GO WITH ME.

We do not know, we cannot guess
How much of mirth or happiness
It may be ours to share or give
In all the days we have to live.
We cannot tell if weal or wo
Will be our fate, but this I know:
My heart is not bereft of cheer
If friends go with me through the year.

What I Think of It.

Naturally, I know nothing of boiler-making; but, as a woman, I am interested in a degree in steam boilers which go before me when I take a journey, are under me when I ascend to the top floor of Lace and Trimming's grand depot for dress goods in an elevator, and dear knows where, as I listen to the click clack all about me in a publishing house. In truth, though I know nothing of boilers, I am well aware of the fact that I am often placed in a position where if one "went off," suddenly, I should go off too, and that my arrival at the home of my dear friend Priscilla with all my limbs the next time I start to pay her a visit, is in a great degree dependent on boilers.

And then, not to be egotistical, there are all the girls at work in factories, and all the men; all the engineers facing the wild winter winds along the roads of iron, and all the men at the brakes, and the conductors of the cars, and the passengers—so many of them—men, women and children, all depending for life on the safety of steam boilers! So that, when I began to read an article about "Conscience in Boiler-Making," I sat horror-stricken, and read every word. It was an article that should rather have been headed, "Want of Conscience in Boiler Making." It set forth a few disagreeable facts not calculated to make one happy. It went on to prove that most boiler-makers have tricks of trade by which they manage to conceal that they have used iron that is too thin—that they have, in fact, constructed a boiler which will burst under any unusual pressure; that, by doing what is called "upsetting the edges," they deceive the inspectors as to the thickness of the sheet of iron; that, in fact, to add to their profits, they endanger human lives.

That men will do this seems impossible. Quite as impossible does it seem that inspectors can be bribed to refrain from thorough examinations of boilers. Yet this must be the case, since an "interior examination" of an ill-made or deceptive boiler must expose its faults; and inspection laws demand this.

It is bad enough to find untrustworthy people in positions where they can rob men of their money; but when the conditions are such that the lives and limbs of others are in their hands, one can scarcely fancy that such tricksters can have human souls.

M. K. D.

He Left it All.

[From the New York Graphic.]

The noble old wit whose geniality and slight impediment in his speech ripen with his years was accosted a day or two ago in the club by a friend who said: "Poor old —— has gone to the silent majority. He must have been very rich. Do you happen to know how much he left?" The reply came like a shot—"Every cent he had!"

Good in all Ways.

[From the Georgia Home Journal.]

In our estimation, the New York *Ledger* is decidedly the best literary weekly paper published in America. Pure in tone, elegant in all respects, its stories, sketches, editorials, answers to correspondents, and all it contains, tend to instruct and elevate as well as to interest its readers.

THE OLD HOME BY THE SEA.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

The old home still o'erlooks the barren shore—
  Grand in its ruin, to my heart still dear—
So near the ocean that its hollow roar,
  By distance mellowed, ever fills the ear.

And still, as roaming through the rooms forlorn,
  After the absence of long years, can I
With some old beauties of the past adorn
  The place neglected and the bleak shore nigh.

Fair was the heiress of the seaside hall—
  Sweet Eleanor, the daughter of the house!
My cousin Nell, so stately and so tall,
  Of the dark tresses and the pure, pale brows.

Here is the doorway, with its carvings quaint,
  Where oft we watched the tall ships far-off glide,
Or saw the ospreys in the mist-clouds faint
  Before they plunged to revel in the tide;

Or marked the passage of the tempest lower,
  With pinions black, o'er the devoted deep,
Till land and sky and darkened sea and shore
  Were torn to fury by its frenzied sweep.

But most she loved the hour when ripples gay
  Creamed up the beach beneath a mellow moon,
When she would bring her light guitar, and play
  And sadly sing to some old ocean tune.

For poor Nell's lover had been lost at sea;
  This was the secret of her smileless life:
And this, alas! the secret that for *me*
  Life has been loveless and unblessed by wife.

Her prayed-for boon, that she with him should meet
  In the far skies, hath long ere this been given.
Long hath she slumbered at the headland's feet,
  And faith like hers must ever bloom in heaven.

But still, though tears regretful dim my sight
  And years of absence have scarce altered me,
'Tis sweet to picture her in memories bright
  That linger round the Old Home by the Sea.

◆

FOR WOMAN'S LOVE.

By **MRS. SOUTHWORTH,**

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "SELF-MADE," &C.

[We here give a synopsis of that portion of this story which has been already published in the *Ledger*, so that, after reading this paragraph, new readers can go on and read the rest of the story just the same as if they had read it all from the beginning: The hero is Regulas Rothsay who, beginning life as a poor orphan boy, without any friend save a reputed witch known as "Old Scythia," worked his way to distinction; was elected governor of his native State; was married (the bride being Corona Haught, who taught him to read when they were both children) the day before he was to have been inaugurated as governor, and unaccountably disappeared on the night of that same day. The deserted bride was the granddaughter of Aaron Rockharrt, a tyrannical old man known as the "Iron King," who lived at Rockhold and carried on extensive iron works at North End, a few miles from his residence. He had two sons, Fabian and Clarence, who were associated with him in his business. Fabian was a good-natured, deceitful, plausible person, and Clarence was an honorable, upright young man. Mrs. Rockharrt, Corona's grandmother, had been so crushed by her tyrannical husband that she was a mere cipher in the household. Corona had a younger brother, Sylvan Haught, who was to enter the Military Academy at West Point. While Corona was a little girl she had a governess named Rose Flowers, a siren-like creature who captivated the whole family with the exception of Corona and her brother Sylvan, who always distrusted her. From this time, as years went on and Regulas Rothsay (or Rule, as his friends called him) rose higher and higher in public estimation, Corona watched his progress with the deepest interest and sympathy. So popular did Rule become, it was generally understood that as soon as he reached the age of twenty-five, so as to be eligible to the office, the people would elect him to the State Assembly. The summer before Rule became a candidate was spent in travelling by the Rockharrts, and Corona's former governess, now known as Mrs. Rose Stillwater, the wife of a sea captain absent on a voyage, accompanied them. Corona accidentally overheard Rose and Fabian Rockharrt talking, by which she vaguely understood that there was no Captain Stillwater, and that Fabian and Rose had either been secretly married, or were secretly engaged, and that a residence for Rose had been fitted up near North End, where she was to live in secret. When the election came off in the fall, Rule was triumphantly elected to the Assembly; and as Aaron Rockharrt had a railroad bill which he wanted to get through the legislature, he took up his abode, with his family, in the State capital, for the winter. Corona was delighted with this, as she felt sure that she should now be able to meet her boy pupil, Rule, whom she had not seen for years, and who had become the most popular young man in the State. How her expectations were fulfilled is shown in the following installment.]

CHAPTER XIII.

THE YOUNG LEGISLATOR.

All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights
Are spectacled to see him.
Oh! he sits high in all the people's hearts;
And that which would appear offence in us
His countenance, like richest alchemy,
Will change to virtue and to worthiness.
SHAKESPEARE.

The friend of truth; the statesman who surveyed
How rich men's joys increased, how poor's decayed;
'Twas his to judge how far the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land. GOLDSMITH.

As soon as the morning papers announced—among other arrivals—that of the new Assemblyman, the Hon. Regulas Rothsay, at the old David Crockett House, Aaron Rockharrt ordered his carriage and drove to that plain, second class hotel, situated far from the fashionable part of the town.

On reaching the building and inquiring for Mr. Rothsay, he was informed that that gentleman was in the house, and was at once, without ceremony, shown up into the young Assemblyman's room.

It was a large, sparsely furnished chamber. At a round table drawn up before the fire sat Regulas Rothsay, writing.

He arose to meet his visitor, rearing a tall, stalwart, rather rugged figure to its full height.

"Mr. Rothsay, I believe," said the Iron King, lifting *his* form.

"Yes. I am glad to see you, Mr. Rockharrt. I hope you are very well," said the young man, drawing forward the only easy-chair in the room, and tacitly inviting his visitor to take it.

"Very well, thank you. Let me congratulate you, Mr. Rothsay. It is very seldom that a man of your years—only twenty-five, I hear—is called to fill so responsible a situation as that of a representative of his district in the State Legislature. Yet I feel sure that the choice of the people could not have settled on a safer man."

"Thank you, Mr. Rockharrt. I shall try to merit your good opinion," said the young man, with a grave smile.

"I have come this morning on a matter of business. Do I interrupt you?" somewhat abruptly inquired Old Aaron.

"Not at all. I am quite at your service," was the courteous answer, as the young man seated himself at the table opposite his visitor, and at once gave him his full attention.

"You are not very busy just now?"

"Oh, no. Only jotting down some notes that can wait."

"Then you can give me half an hour."

"An hour, or more, if you require it, Mr. Rockharrt."

"Thank you. I will be as brief as possible. I know your time *must* be valuable," said Old Aaron Rockharrt. And then he paused for a brief moment, during which both men, sitting opposite, regarded each other with curious interest.

Rule Rothsay was wondering whether Aaron Rockharrt recognized in him any one whom he had ever seen before. But the Iron King never dreamed that the talented young legislator was the development of the barefooted errand boy of the "Works" whom he had known fifteen or sixteen years since.

"It is about a charter for a new railroad that I wish to build. The company—all responsible men—has been incorporated some time, but I have never succeeded in getting a charter from the legislature."

Regulas Rothsay was all attention.

The Iron King went into minute details of the projected enterprise—details with which we need not trouble our readers.

Still Regulas Rothsay was all attention. He knew the man before him, both from early recollections and present rumor. Everybody knew Old Aaron Rockharrt—for he was too proud, headstrong and egotistical to descend to any deceit—knew him for an honest, truthful, but wholly selfish and unsympathizing man; and, therefore, Rule Rothsay knew him—knew that no humane or public benefit would ever be a motive in his action, and that this contemplated railroad was to put money in *his* pocket.

Rule saw all this, but he also saw that the enterprise would be a benefit to the community at large, and especially to the workingmen, the farmers, shop-keepers, and mechanics; so when he had heard all the old Iron King had to say on the subject, he promptly gave a promise, which neither favor, affection nor self-interest could ever have won from him, but which reason, conscience and the public good constrained him to give—namely, to present the petition for the charter to the Assembly, and to support it with all his might.

Old Aaron Rockharrt got up and shook hands with his young advocate, thanked him heartily, and left him.

On reaching home the family autocrat became more communicative to his household than was his custom.

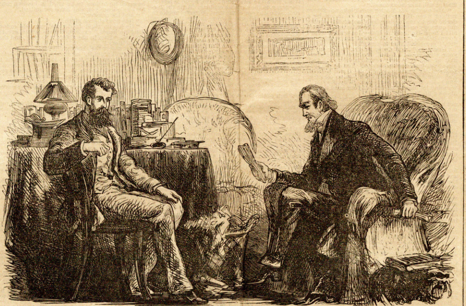
"Mr. Rothsay will present my petition, and move for a bill to be passed granting us the charter for the railroad. He will support that bill with all his strength; and so I feel sure, positively *sure*, that it will pass the Assembly. Whether it will afterwards pass the State Senate I cannot tell," he said, as he entered the back parlor, where the ladies were passing the forenoon in needle work or reading.

All expressed pleasure in this prospect of success.

"Mrs. Rockharrt," he next said, turning to his little wife, "I shall give a small dinner party on this day week, and invite young Rothsay to meet some of his colleagues. Cora, I will give you a list, and you may write the invitations. The affair is not large enough to require engraved cards."

So saying, Old Aaron sat down in a large arm-chair, and began to make out his list.

When he had finished it, he handed the paper to Cora, saying:



AARON ROCKHARRT'S VISIT TO ROTHSAY.

"The invitations must be written and sent out *to-day*."

Cora went to her room to set about her task.

The list of ten names included some of the political leaders of the State, local celebrities, whom, at any other time, the young girl would have been curious to meet; but now all her interest was absorbed in the prospect of seeing Rule Rothsay, that marvel of self-education, perseverance, and deserved success, at which the whole community wondered, Legislator, Christian and philanthropist, with a noble record behind him, and a glorious prospect before him, and yet a man of almost unknown origin.

Cora was deeply anxious to meet him, solicitous about the impression she should make on him. Would she be an unpleasant reminder to him of the days of his poverty and humiliation? She hoped and prayed that she might not be that! She resolved that by no word or look, or hint of any sort, would she betray even a memory of those days! She would also warn her good grandmother, her pleasant-tempered Uncle Fabian, and her kind and considerate Uncle Clarence, not to betray by speech, or glance, or sign, any remembrance of the past, but to seem as oblivious of it as Old Aaron Rockharrt really was.

When Cora had directed and sealed all the cards of invitation she rang for the hall footman Jerome, and gave him orders to take them directly to the post office.

Then, like any other girl, she began to think of her dress for the first dinner party at which she was to appear.

All the invitations were accepted.

The day of the dinner party came.

At half-past seven in the evening, the family were all assembled in the drawing-room waiting for their guests. The dinner was to be served at eight.

Old Mrs. Rockharrt, in honor of the occasion, wore her best black velvet dress, with point lace cap and fichu.

Cora Haught wore a crimson rep silk, with black lace flounces and fichu, and pearl ornaments.

Regulas Rothsay was the first arrival. He came unfashionably early, and full twenty minutes before any one else.

He was announced with the usual verbal blunder of the colored footman of that period as—

"Mr. Whatsay!"

Cora looked up and saw coming in a tall, very tall, broad-shouldered, and somewhat awkward figure, with large hands and feet, but with a noble head and a grand though rugged face, framed in by tawny hair and beard, and lighted and softened by a pair of beautiful, gentle gray eyes, whose sweetness and tenderness in boyhood Cora well remembered. He wore the evening dress of the time, which sat ungracefully upon him.

As he appeared, Mr. Rockharrt arose and welcomed him, then presented him to Mrs. Rockharrt, and then to Miss Haught.

Both ladies, in turn, received him as if he were a perfect stranger, whom they had never seen before, but with great courtesy.

Yet, as Cora's eyes met Rule's, there was a mutual deep recognition, which only eyes could utter, from the soul of each; and each knew that in those few brief moments they both lived over again the sweet days of their childhood's friendship.

Next Mr. Rockharrt presented the guest to Mr. Fabian and to Mr. Clarence, who, following Cora's instructions, received him with perfect politeness, yet as one whom they had never known before under other circumstances.

When these presentations were finished, Rule turned as if he would have gone over to the sofa where Mrs. Rockharrt and Cora Haught sat.

But Old Aaron took immediate possession of him, walked him off to the other end of the long room and began to talk to him about the railroad charter, not knowing in his all-absorbing egotism that to speak to the young legislator on this subject at this time and place was in very bad taste.

Neither Cora nor any other of the family party could catch a word of the conversation between Rule and Mr. Rockharrt, but the tones of Rule's voice reached them, and a singularly sweet voice it was.

Rule's eyes and voice—gentle and tender—were in charming contrast to the rugged form and face.

Other guests came in, and the *tête-à-tête* between the two men was broken up.

Dinner was announced.

It went off to the satisfaction of all parties. Then followed a social evening.

The company broke up at eleven o'clock.

Regulas had found no opportunity of speaking with Cora. Old Aaron Rockharrt had too entirely appropriated him.

Not until the moment of leave-taking could he address a word to her; then he asked:

"May I call to see you?"

"Yes; I shall be very glad if you do," she answered, frankly.

"When may I come?"

"At any time. We shall all be very glad to see you. Come to lunch to-morrow or any day."

"Thank you; I will."

There was a gentle, scarcely perceptible pressure of his hand as he relinquished hers and turned away.

When the guests were all gone, the family discussed the new Assemblyman.

"He is an honest fellow, with no grace or beauty to boast of; a great, awkward, red-headed giant," said Old Aaron.

"Oh, grandpa!" exclaimed Cora, who not being consciously in love with Rule, much as she liked and respected him, could speak her mind freely; "no beauty or grace to boast of! Well, perhaps not. But he has such—such—" She was at loss for a word. "*Such* eyes, and *such* a smile, and *such* a voice."

"Well, I hope some of you—one of you women—had the common sense to ask him to call, though common sense, as a rule, is not your strong point," said the old man.

"Did *you* ask him to come, grandpa?"

"Of course I did, Miss."

"Well, so did I. At least, I gave him leave to do so when he asked it."

"And *you*, Mrs. Rockharrt?" inquired the old man, turning to his small wife.

"I—I didn't. I wasn't sure you'd like me to ask him," hesitatingly replied the timid woman.

"You might have known that I would have liked you to do so, if you had had any sense at all. But you haven't. Good night, Cora. Good night, boys. I'm going to bed," exclaimed the family despot, striding out of the room.

This motion broke up the family circle for the night, as they all followed his example.

Early the next morning Mr. Fabian started by the express train for North End to inspect the works.

A little later Mr. Clarence went to the Legislature Library to read.

Later still, Mr. Rockharrt went out on business connected with his charter.

Mrs. Rockharrt went across the street to make a long call on an old crony.

"What will you do with yourself, my dear, this long forenoon?" she inquired.

"Sit here and wait for Rule," replied the girl.

"What! is he coming?"

"I don't know. I asked him to luncheon to-day, or to come at any time."

"Oh! then I will not stay long at Mrs. Jackson's."

"Don't hurry yourself, grandma. If Rule comes I will send Jerome across for you."

"Very well, my dear," said the old lady, as she left the room.

Cora sat in the drawing-room, waiting; but the forenoon passed and the hoped-for visitor did not appear.

Mrs. Rockharrt returned in time for luncheon, and the day was spent quietly.

The gentlemen, except Mr. Fabian, who remained at the works—*as he said*—returned in time for the late dinner. But Rule did not come.

Two days went by, and still Mr. Rothsay did not take advantage of the cordial invitation given him.

Cora felt vexed and disappointed. She did not take into consideration the public duties of the young Assemblyman, or how these duties would most likely be very zealously performed by a newly elected and enthusiastic man.

On the third evening, however, Rule came. Mrs. Rockharrt and Cora were alone.

Mr. Rockharrt had gone to keep an appointment with one of the State Senators who was interested in the projected railroad.

Mr. Fabian had not yet returned from—the works.

Mr. Clarence had gone to a lecture on "Ant Life."

Rule came in, announced as before as—

"Mr. Whatsay."

Cora smiled at the blunder, as she went forward to meet him.

Rule took the hand the young girl held out, bowed over it, and went on to Mrs. Rockharrt, who stood up to welcome him.

The next minute the three were seated around a table drawn under the gas light, and covered with books, pamphlets and the latest magazines.

"This reminds me of the old times when you were all so good to a certain little barelegged lad, who was always so proud to run your errands," said Rule, in his plain way, but with his sweet voice and winning smile.

"Those were very happy days, the happiest of my whole life," Cora assented.

"Yes, they were very happy days to the lad. But he must have been a great nuisance to the dainty little lady who was his first teacher. He was a rude, unkempt, tattered little urchin!"

"But always clean, and bright, and gentle as a queen's son—should be," added Cora.

"It is like you to say so," he replied.

"But it is true! I see us both as we used to sit in that back porch—I cutting, and snipping, and sewing at my doll's dresses. You—I see you plainest of all, when you were writing your copies, sitting at a little table Uncle Fabian gave us out of his own room, bending over your copying slate, with your elbows squared and your tongue bitten between your lips. You always did that when you were taking great pains. I never even tried to cure you of that bad habit. Do you still bite your tongue when you are taking great pains with your speeches, Ru—Mr. Rothsay?"

"Oh, do call me by the child name as you were about to do! No one has called me so for years and years. And I miss my childhood in missing the name," he pleaded, even more eloquently with the gentle eyes than with the soft voice.

"Well, Rule, do you still bite your tongue when you write?"

"I—never remember to have done so at any time," he said, with a smile.

"Oh, yes you did! But it was so long ago that you have forgotten! Oh, so long ago, Rule! Looking back, it seems but yesterday. Thinking of it, it seems ages ago! It makes me feel quite old! Yet I am not quite twenty yet! How old are you, Rule?"

"A little more than twenty-five."

"Oh! how fast you have got on!"

"There have been many others who have got on faster."

"Yes—perhaps so, and these have been your inspirations—

'Lives of great men all remind us,' &c."

"These have been my exemplars, not my inspiration. Yet I had an ever-burning inspiration, even from my boyhood," he said, bending his eloquent eyes upon her face.

"And what was that?" she asked, casting *her* eyes down.

"To merit a little lady's friendship," answered the young man, gravely and tenderly.

"And who is she?" inquired the girl, not that she did not know, but that she wished to hear him say.

"Cora Haught," he answered, softly. And Cora thought that never before had she heard her name syllabeled in such melody.

"And you remembered me all those years, while you were working, struggling on, even after we had ceased our childish letter-writing to each other? Oh, how pleasant that is to know of, Rule. And I thought of you too, Rule, all that time. I followed every step of your upward progress. I read all your editorials in the *Watch*, and all your speeches that were reported in other papers. And in this last political campaign, oh, what a partisan I was! And when you were elected, who so triumphant as I? I was wild with delight! Was I not, grandma?" she said, suddenly turning and appealing to the old lady.

"Yes, Mr. Rothsay, she was. I never saw her so enthusiastic before. It was all because the young friend of her childhood had achieved so much by his own might."

"By the blessing of the Divine Providence on his efforts, my dear lady."

"Yes, Mr. Rothsay, that is true. And Cora was overjoyed. But she never expected to see you again—never, Mr. Rothsay."

"Dear lady," said Regulas, taking the little white hand in his own and speaking very softly, "will you please do me a great kindness? Will you call me by the boy's name you used in the sweet old time? Listen, madam: I have not a kinsman or a kinswoman in all this world. I am, perhaps, the loneliest man on earth, and the feeling of loneliness in this populous world, so full of happy family relations, depresses and even weakens. No one calls me by my name! I am 'Mr. Rothsay' to everybody! May I not be 'Rule' to you?"

"Yes, dear boy! yes! for you do seem a boy to me, for all your great beard—when you look at me with little Rule's big, soft eyes."

"Thank you, lady, thank you!" said Regulas, lifting the little, shrivelled hand to his lips and then laying it gently on her lap.

"It *is* sad for one to have no kindred in all the world, isn't it, now, Cora?" deprecatingly inquired Mrs. Rockharrt, as in apology for her little burst of feeling.

"Yes," breathed the girl, in a very low voice.

"And it is weak and absurd in any one to complain of such a condition!" exclaimed the young man, pulling himself up with a laugh. "But you see I wanted you to call me by my boyish name."

"And it was wicked in you to forget that I was your little sister by adoption, Rule," said Cora.

"Where is Clarence? Has Fabian got home yet? Why is the gas not lighted in my study?"

It was the voice of Old Aaron Rockharrt, who had come upon them unawares. He had let himself in by his latch-key, and even his heavy footfalls had not been heard in the deep softness of the Turkey carpet.

Regulas stood up.

"Oh, Mr. Rothsay! Glad to see you! Wished to have a talk with you about— But stay! I will return in a moment," said the old man; and after shaking hands with his visitor he stalked off to ring for his man and give some orders.

"Oh, Rule," whispered Cora, "I am so glad that grandfather appreciates you so highly. I do not believe that there is any one who thinks more of you than he does. And I know that there is no one he esteems so highly as yourself. He is a cynic and a pessimist, you know. He really believes the most of the human race to be dishonest, untruthful, and utterly untrustworthy. He recognizes that *you* are the opposite of all these. He knows that you are. It is your truth and honesty that attracts him, Rule. With your other traits of character, with your broad charity, your enlightened philanthropy, he has no sympathy, Rule. He can have none!—Here he comes back again."

Old Aaron Rockharrt entered, attended by Jerome bringing two tall wax candles in silver candlesticks.

"Come into my study, Mr. Rothsay. I wish to call your attention to some of the conditions of the desired charter, and this is the best opportunity of doing so," he said.

The young man arose with a sigh and a smile, and said:

"I will bid you good night at once, then, dear Mrs. Rockharrt, for we are likely to be late over our subject, and I must not keep you up."

He shook hands with each lady, and followed his leader from the room.

This ended the social evening.

Mrs. Rockharrt and her granddaughter soon retired to bed.

But it was late before Regulas Rothsay was permitted to depart. Later still when Mr. Clarence let himself in with his latch-key.

CHAPTER XIV.

"NO MORE ALONE."

No more alone thro' the world's wilderness,
  Altho' I trod the paths of high intent,
I journey'd now; no more companionless,
  Where solitude is like despair, I went.

Thoughts of great deeds were mine, dear friend, when first
The clouds that wrap this world from youth did pass.
I do remember well the hour that burst my spirit's sleep,
And from that hour did I with earnest thought heap knowledge. PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

After this Regulas Rothsay came often and more often, until at length he passed every evening with the Rockharrts when they were at home.

Old Aaron Rockharrt esteemed him as he esteemed very, very few of his fellow-creatures. Mrs. Rockharrt really loved him. Mr. Fabian and Mr. Clarence liked him. Cora admired and honored him. He was made so welcome in the family circle that he felt himself quite at home among them.

Mrs. Rockharrt often referred to him very affectionately in his absence.

"I declare," she said to Cora one day, "that huge, red-bearded man has little Rule's lovely eyes and gentle voice, as if the child was still looking out from behind the noble mask of the man's face."

At another time she said:

"I never in my life saw a man of so much intellectual power and activity with such childlike frankness and simplicity."

Cora seldom answered these observations except by a single word of assent.

Besides spending so many evenings with the Rockharrts at their own fireside, Regulas Rothsay often met them abroad, at parties, balls or parlor concerts, to which he and they had been invited.

On these occasions joined them, and was welcomed.

People who saw him always in attendance on the Rockharrts, and showing an affectionate interest in all of them that he was too frank and simple to conceal, began to say, first, that Miss Haught was the attraction; then, that the young people were lovers; finally, that they were engaged to be married. But none of this was true.

From the beginning—whenever it had been—Rule and Cora had loved too deeply and truly, though half unconsciously, to "fall in love" now, in a city drawing-room.

The season went on. More urgent business before the Assembly delayed the presentation of the railroad bill.

Mr. and Mrs. Rockharrt and Cora always went to the "House" when it was known "Rothsay" was to speak.

And it was always a fresh delight and marvel to both women to see the transfiguration of the man that ensued on these occasions, when any question vital with interest to humanity came up before the Assembly. Then the great, clumsy, overgrown boy with the kind eyes and the soft voice, kindled flame-like into the orator, inspired, eloquent, authoritative, convincing, carrying everything before him.

Cora's soul thrilled, glowed, rejoiced, triumphed in him, as she looked and listened.

"And to think he is our Rule, grandma!" she would afterwards say. "Our, *our* Rule! He belongs to no one but us—and his country—he has no relations but us, by affinity. Our glorious Rule!"

When the Christmas holidays drew near, Sylvan Haught came home to spend them with his relations. He brought a better record than ever before, and expressed his conviction that by the next summer he should be ready to pass an examination for West Point.

"Where is—'The Rose whom all admire?'" he chanted to his sister.

"I don't know," answered Cora. "We have not seen her since we parted in Baltimore, between two and three years ago."

"But haven't you heard from her?"

"Not for a year or more. You see, at grandpa's suggestion, grandma wrote to her at intervals, inviting her to visit us at Rockhold, but she never accepted the invitation; and so at length the correspondence gradually died out."

"And a good job, too—'The Rose that all admire,'" whistled the youth.

"Sylvan, as a mere matter of curiosity, I would like to know why you dislike Mrs. Stillwater so much?" inquired Cora.

"'Still water runs deep' and might drown a fellow before he knows where he is."

"Nonsense! Don't play on her name. Everybody seems to think her as amiable as she is beautiful. Now why do you dislike her?"

"*I* don't know. Do *you?* I know why I dislike a snake, and avoid the poison oak, and all that, but hang ME if I know why I dislike *her;* but I *do*, and that is the sacred truth. 'The Rose that all ad*mi*-er,'"

"Oh, *hush!* I'm tired of that. Ah! here comes Mr. Rothsay!" exclaimed Cora, glancing through the front window.

"Mr.—*which?*" demanded the youth.

"'Mr.—which!' Is that your academic style? Mr. Rothsay, I said. Come, look at him! He is on the opposite side of the street, coming down the State House steps. You can see him from this window."

Sylvan went to the side of the window. Rule was now crossing the street towards the house.

"Is *that* Rule Rothsay?"

"Yes, it is."

"What a great, big, red-bearded monster!"

"You little wretch!" blazed Cora, turning fiercely upon the boy.

Rule entered, and Cora's brow cleared.

"This is Sylvan, Mr. Rothsay. You remember my brother?" said the girl.

"Oh! yes, indeed, though he was a very little lad when I saw him, years ago," said Rule, with his rare smile, as he shook hands with the youth.

"He is three years younger than I am; he is nearly seventeen now. He is a student of the Franklin Collegiate School, preparing for West Point."

"Ah! you will be a soldier. Well, the army is a necessary evil."

The entrance of Mr. Rockharrt stopped the conversation, for he greeted Rule Rothsay only to carry him off to his study to talk of "the bill."

Both Houses of the Legislature adjourned on Christmas Eve, to meet again on the second of January.

Old Aaron Rockharrt invited his favorite to come to the house as their guest for Christmas week, and Mrs. Rockharrt so warmly joined in the invitation that Rule gladly accepted the proffered hospitality.

The seven days that followed, in the house where he was received and treated as a son, were perhaps the happiest days that the lonely man had ever known.

After the Christmas holidays were over Sylvan returned to college.

On the second of January the Assembly met again. The first business taken up was that of the bill to charter the projected railroad. It was presented by Mr. Rothsay, and referred to the proper committee.

No matter how obviously right and proper to be passed a bill may be, there are in every legislative body certain members who worry it, toss it, tear it, pitch it up, pull it down, and torture it for days and weeks before they either kill it or pass it. This is their business.

The charter bill was reported with certain amendments, sent back again and reported again, with modified amendments, laid on the table, taken up, and generally tormented for ten days, and then passed by a small majority.

Rule had conscientiously done his best; but the bill in question, though heartily approved of, was not one in which he could rise to enthusiasm.

And this was the result.

Old Aaron Rockharrt thanked him stiffly.

"You have worked it through, sir! No one but yourself could have done it! And it is a wonder that even *you* could do so with such a set of pig-headed rascals as our Assemblymen. And now, will it pass the Senate? That is what I want to know."

"I believe it will, Mr. Rockharrt. I have been speaking to many of the Senators on the subject, and find them well disposed towards it," said Rule.

To be brief, the bill was soon taken up by the Senate; and after very much the same treatment it had received in the Assembly, it came safely through the ordeal, and was passed—again by a small majority.

Old Aaron Rockharrt was triumphant, in his sullen, dogged and undemonstrative way.

But having gained his ends, for which alone he had come to the city, he ordered his family to pack up and be ready to leave town for Rockhold the next day but one.

"But, my dear Aaron," the little old wife ventured to urge, "this is only the twenty-fifth of January, and—"

"MADAM! Since when have you begun to set up your will in opposition to mine?" stiffly demanded the autocrat.

Mrs. Rockharrt winced and collapsed.

There was no more to be said, by her at least.

A little later young Mr. Clarence took up the argument.

"Father," he said, "do you not think we might stay a few weeks longer? The weather is very severe and our country house is very cold. This one is warm and better suited to mother's delicate frame. And besides, Cora is enjoying herself so much that—"

"Clarence, you are such an idiot that I am sometimes tempted to think that you were changed in your cradle and are no son of mine and your mother's," said the despot, after staring the young man out of countenance.

But the worst was to come.

When all the household were assembled at luncheon he shot his last bolt.

"Now look you here, all of you! We are going to Rockhold to-morrow. I do not wish to have any company there. I am tired of company! I hate company! I am going to the country to get rid of company. So see that you do not, any of you, invite any one to visit us."

A little panic of silence fell upon the family group; for more than one guest had been thought of as a relief to the monotony of Rockhold.

Mr. Fabian was the first to break the spell. He spoke in the interest of his mother and his niece, both of whom he knew took much pleasure in the society of Rule.

"May we not make an exception in the case of your friend, Rothsay?" he inquired.

"Most certainly not! I will have nobody, understand. Rothsay is an honest man and some day will be a great man. I owe the success of my bill to him, no doubt. But the bill was a good thing in itself, observe. He had mind enough to recognize that fact, and of course it was his *duty*, and *no more* than his duty, to support it. That ends the affair. Now, let me hear no more about visitors at Rockhold. I won't have any."

This certainly ended the discussion. Not another word was said on the subject by anybody.

The next day was spent in active preparations for departure.

Cora went out in the carriage to leave cards of address at the houses of all her own and her grandmother's city friends, while Mrs. Rockharrt remained at home to superintend the packing.

In the evening Rule Rothsay came and was told of the intended departure.

"So soon, so suddenly! Oh, how I shall miss you!" he said, frankly and simply.

Ah! how the kind-hearted old lady longed to say:

"Come down by the express every Saturday night and stay over Sunday with us. Come down any day when the House is not in session, and spend it with us. We shall be so happy to have you."

But she had been forbidden by Mr. Rockharrt to do this, and she dared not disobey his commands.

She felt a sort of shame as of conscious rudeness in omitting the invitation that seemed to be obligatory under the circumstances.

"It seems," she said to herself, "as if Mr. Rockharrt, having used the young man and got all he wanted out of him, meant to drop him at once. It is very mortifying."

Nor did Cora suffer less than her grandmother.

When Rule asked her on parting that night:

"When shall I see you again?"

She wished to reply:

"Whenever you please to come to Rockhold."

But she was forbidden to do this, and her cheeks burned with humiliation at her seeming want of politeness as she answered:

"Next season, I hope, we will be in town again."

Rule looked disappointed and saddened.

"May I write to you sometimes?" he asked, after a short pause.

"Oh, yes! Please do as often as you can and I will be a very punctual correspondent," she answered, warmly.

And then he pressed her hand, dropped it gently, and went away.

The next morning the Rockharrt family left town for North End, where they arrived early in the afternoon.

The three men remained at the works to inspect progress, and sent Mrs. Rockharrt and Cora Haught home to Rockhold in the hack from the North End Hotel.

Mrs. Rockharrt was very glad of this arrangement, for, as the servants left in charge of the house were not expecting the family so soon, they might not be prepared for them. In which case, if anything was wrong, it might be righted before the arrival of the family bugaboo.

They found the house shut up, damp and cold, the servants panic-stricken at being taken unawares.

The deadly cold, damp, close air struck chills through the delicate frame of the old lady.

Even Cora, with all her warm, young blood, shivered in that atmosphere.

"It was heartless, it was perfectly devilish, to send you home to this murderous house!" she exclaimed, in excitement.

"Hush! hush! my child! You must not say such things," said Mrs. Rockharrt.

"Well, it *was*, then, dear grandma. And I begin to think that rebellion in your case would be a sacred duty. But come into the kitchen. There is a good fire there, I suppose. And sit and rest, and let Nina make you a hot cup of tea. Kitty, bring that arm-chair for your mistress," said the young girl.

And then, having seen her grandmother established in the easy-chair in the chimney corner of the kitchen, and the preparations for tea well under way, Cora left the old lady in the care of the cook, placed herself at the head of a staff of house-servants, and went all through the vault-like building, having doors and windows opened and good fires kindled in every room.

This took two hours, at the end of which she came back to look after her grandmother, whom she found still seated by the kitchen fire, warmed and refreshed in body, but troubled in mind lest a good dinner should not be practicable for her tyrant.

"For Heaven's sake, try to do the best—the very best you can, Nina. You know that your master will listen to no excuses."

"Well, old mist'ess, we's got hams and tongues in de smoke house and corn' beef an' pickle pork in de meat house, but it takes hours for them to boil. An' we's got plenty o' poultry in de yard; but dey's not berry good w'en dey's killed an' cook' de same day! But I'll do de bes' I can! Dat is all anybody can do!"

"And remember, Nina! Oh, remember! Your master will take no excuses!"

"And maybe *his* Master won't take no excuses neither when He axes him wot he meant by a darin' for to make eberybody so drefful oneasy an' onhappy on this yeth. I hope he won't, that's all! I hope He'll say to him—'Jes walk you'se'f down below, sinner! de debbil am waitin' for *you*,'" grumbled Nina to herself.

"Grandma," said Cora, gently, "come up to your own room. I had the fire made there first of all. It is very comfortable now. And, grandma, dear, don't worry so! You do *all* that you can for grandpa, and if he is not pleased, why should you care? Why are you so afraid of him? He does not hurt you. Why, *I*, even *I*, wouldn't let him hurt a hair of your head to save his own life!"

"My dear, it isn't that! Of course he would not hurt me. He is a true, honest man. But, oh, my child! You do not know what it is to be day and night, night and day, *all one's life*, beside an angry, sulky, fault-finding man!"

"No," said Cora "*and I never mean to know*, please the Lord! I certainly am resolved never to marry. And I do hope and trust that our dear Rule will never marry either, for there must be some women just as hard to live with as some men, and so he might be very unhappy. I hope he won't risk it!"

Cora went with her grandmother to the comfortable room, helped her to change her dress, and left her lying down to rest, while she went to the kitchen to lend her aid in the preparation for dinner.

But the prospect of a satisfactory meal on so short a notice was so poor that they were all greatly relieved when the three gentlemen returned to the house and reported that they had dined at the North End Hotel, and wanted nothing more.

"Thank Heaven, and amen!" fervently aspirated Cora, as she went up to her grandmother's room and repeated this good news.

A monotonous season followed, at least for the two ladies, who led a very secluded life at the dreary old stone house on the mountain side.

The three gentlemen found occupation and entertainment in frequent visits to the works, to inspect operations and keep their foremen up to their duties, and in little social dinners at the North End Hotel.

Either Mr. Rockharrt, Mr. Fabian or Mr. Clarence went up every morning to the works; often two went together, and occasionally all three.

But Mrs. Rockharrt and Cora, left alone all day in the solitary building, employed themselves in a routine of domestic duties, which consisted of ordering the meals, overlooking the linen or the china closets, doing a little needlework, or reading the few newspapers that reached the hall.

Their only change of scene was in going to attend service at the mission church of North End, on Sunday mornings, when the day happened to be fine and the roads good.

But as the season advanced and the winter's frost and snow melted and the spring rains came on, the roads became so nearly impassable that Old Aaron Rockharrt forbade the carriage to be taken out. So Mrs. Rockharrt and her granddaughter were almost as prisoners confined to the house.

Mr. Rockharrt and his sons, however, continued to visit the works; but they rode on sure-footed horses along the mountain bridle-path of nearly solid rock.

Cora Haught had one dear delight, one sweet consolation in her dreary imprisonment—Rule Rothsay's letters. They came every week, and were read, pondered on, dreamed over, and answered, fully, heartily, intelligently. It was a great benefit to Cora Haught to be in constant communion with the mind and heart of Rule Rothsay.

She longed to have him invited to Rockhold, but no one dared to ask him to come, since the Iron King had set his iron heel down upon the thought of company.

"Never mind, dear. We shall see our Rule when we go to town next winter. This is April, and it is only eight months off. The time will soon pass, dear," said the lady, in a consoling tone.

But the time did *not* soon pass. The spring, summer and autumn crept slowly away in the lonely dwelling.

Nor did the family go to the State capital that season. The Iron King had no bill to push through the legislature, and therefore no motive for going.

But in the last days of November he announced to his family, with the usual suddenness of his peremptory will, that he should go to Washington City for the winter, taking with him his wife and granddaughter, and leaving his two sons in charge of the works, and that they would be joined in Washington at Christmas by his grandson, for whom he was about to apply for admission into the Military Academy at West Point.

Cora was deeply disappointed, but, a few days later, when she wrote to Rule to tell him the news, she added:

"But we shall be at a hotel. The Legislature will adjourn for a week at Christmas, as it always does. Can you not come to Washington at that time?"

"For," she thought, "the hotel is free to all decent people, and grandpa cannot object to any friend calling upon us there."

Rule promptly wrote in reply that he should certainly have the pleasure of joining their party in Washington at Christmas.

Cora showed this letter to her grandmother, who heartily sympathized with her child's delight.

After this both women went about their preparations for the journey with such zeal and cheerfulness that the Iron King was half inclined to revoke his decision, which really seemed to be making some people much too happy.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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Preaching the Gospel.

It is painful to sit in a promiscuous assemblage of fashionable people, and listen to the discussion on the merits of the new preacher. Need I draw the picture? Can you not fancy each sighing maid, with uprolling eyes, giving her opinion for, or against; and so on up, through the long list of those who must "pay the preacher?" When I think of a true minister, I think of a preacher of the gospel. And when I think of the gospel and of its reception by the children of men, I call to mind the saying of the old clergyman who was called upon, one evening, to extemporize a religious address on board of a Hudson River steamer, that had been belated by the breaking of a piece of machinery between Albany and New York.

The aged divine remarked that he probably had men of all religious sects and opinions before him, "but," said he, "I have lived long enough to trust implicitly in my Heavenly Father. The wandering child who comes to Him truly repentant, and eager to find the right, will not be cast out. There will be no question as to the *sect* that child knew in life. The old grain-merchant of the metropolis, when a cargo of wheat comes to hand, is not particular to ask through what channel it reached him; he will only seek to know—*Is it good?* And so, my friends, I am content to believe it will be with the Great Judge on the other side!"

Rowland Hill once made a capital remark upon the fashionable method of criticising sermons. Said he,—"Supposing you were attending to hear a will read where you expected a legacy to be left you,—or, at least, where you had a material interest in the document. Would you employ your time while it was being read in criticising the manner in which the lawyer read it? No, you would not; you would be giving anxious ear to hear if anything had been left for you, and how much it was. That is the way in which I would advise you to hear the gospel."

Hill was preaching, once upon a time, on the subject of debt, when a man in the audience, in a low tone, wondered if he—the preacher—was punctual always in paying *his* debts. The minister heard him, and stopped in the midst of a sentence, and looked him in the face.

"My very good friend," he said, "I think I never paid a debt in my life,—saving only the debt mentioned by Saint Paul, in my text—'Owe no man anything, but to love one another.' As for any other debt but that of love, I never in my life bought a thing for which I could not, and did not, pay on the spot." C.

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—In proportion as men develop their moral nature, everything else will assume its proper proportions. The highest duties, the most vital truths, the deepest principles of action will occupy the foreground, and minor interests and lesser duties will fall gracefully into their proper positions.

AZON THE TERRIBLE;

OR,

The Spectre of the Brocken.

A TALE OF THE BLACK FOREST.

By JOHN FREDERICK SMITH.

[We here give a synopsis of that portion of "Azon the Terrible" which has been already published in the *Ledger*, so that, after reading this paragraph, new readers can go on and read the rest of the story just the same as if they had read it all from the beginning: The scene is laid in Germany, in the eleventh century. Azon the Terrible, who was one of the most powerful nobles in the empire, and was known as the Palsgrave, aided by the Duke of Baden, and Conrade the Archbishop of Cologne, was trying to overrun the possessions of his weaker neighbors, one after the other, and annex them to his own. These confederates were known as THE THREE, and were feared throughout Germany. At the commencement of this story the Pope was on his death-bed, and THE THREE were plotting to elect his successor. A Benedictine friar, of commanding appearance, on his way as a messenger from Rome, was assailed by armed men in a forest belonging to the Count of Ragenstein, but, with the assistance of a forester, escaped. Young Lord Roland, son and heir of the Count of Ragenstein, and the hero of the story, who had been on a mission to the Archbishop of Cologne, chancing to pass by, took the friar, who gave his name as Julio, under his protection to his father's castle, along with a ruffian named Fritz, who led the attack on the friar, and whom the forester had disabled. On arriving there, the count, and his chief manager, named Alf (who was a dwarf in stature, but of surprising mental and physical ability), seemed to recognize the friar as a person of great importance, but treated him as though he were only a simple friar. There were three young ladies living in the castle, under the tutelage of the Countess of Ragenstein. The eldest, named Carlina, was a remote connection of the Palsgrave's family. She was selfish and treacherous, and very jealous of Elgitha, the youngest of the three maidens, who was of unknown origin, and whom Carlina thought was looked upon with favor by Roland. Louise, the other maiden, was a devoted friend to Elgitha. Alf distrusted and watched Carlina. He had been Roland's tutor, and loved him dearly, and the young lord returned his affection in full measure. Alf hinted to Roland that a plot was on foot by Azon the Terrible to seize Ragenstein, and that he (Alf) was at work to frustrate it. The friar, at his own request, was sent under a guard commanded by Roland to the Abbey of Corbey, two days' journey from Ragenstein, taking with him the captured ruffian, Fritz. Before he left, the friar, whose penetrating eye had singled out Elgitha as a person of importance, gave her a costly relic—a piece of the Cross, set in gold and jewels, and with the seal of the Pope impressed upon it. This supposed Friar Julio was in fact the celebrated Hildebrand, who soon afterwards ascended the papal throne as Pope Gregory VII. The plot of Azon the Terrible to seize the castle of Ragenstein having been frustrated by the astuteness of Alf, he charged Elgitha, whom he seemed to have secret reason to fear, with attempting the life of his son Rodolph, and demanded that she should be given up to him for trial. But the Count of Ragenstein refused to give up Elgitha, and sent her, with her friend Louise, under charge of Roland, to whom she was now betrothed, accompanied by his friend Count Otto of Zelle, who was the lover of Louise, to the Abbey of Corbey, which, by virtue of a grant from Charlemagne, had the right of shielding any one who sought protection (or *sanctuary*, as it was called) within its walls, even against the power of the emperor. Azon sent a band of mercenaries, under Rodolph, his son, to capture and slay Elgitha, but Roland slew Rodolph, and placed Elgitha and Louise in sanctuary in the abbey. The abbot, on seeing Elgitha and hearing her story, was powerfully moved, as if by harrowing recollections, and vowed to protect her against all the civil power of the empire. When Azon heard of this he got his friends, the Duke of Baden and the Archbishop of Cologne, and also Henry IV. of Germany, to agree to unite with him in attacking the Abbey of Corbey and overthrowing its power. He then sent a knight named Hendricks, with six trusty companions, with a polite message to the abbot, requesting that Fritz, the captive captain of his Lanskeneters, should be delivered up to him. When Fritz was first taken to the abbey two monks—named Bernardo and St. Clair—who were in the pay of Azon, had attempted to set him free, but on going to the cell where he had been imprisoned, they could not find him. The abbot, suspecting their treachery, had removed Fritz to a cell which he told Roland and Friar Julio was known only to himself and the aged jailer, Brother Hugo. Alf, the shrewd dwarf of Ragenstein, having come to the abbey with a message from his master, requested the privilege of visiting Fritz in his cell. The abbot, after consulting with the Canon Bertucci, who had come to the abbey as a legate from Rome, granted Alf's request, and the result is narrated in the following installment.]

CHAPTER XVII.

Of all the passions that debase mankind,
Chill the warm heart, and enervate the mind,
Fear is the worst; checking, as with a rein,
Each honest impulse for a moment's gain.
And, after all, what are the things we fear?
Lean poverty? The world's ungenerous sneer?
The breath of slander? The oppressor's wrong?
It is our weakness makes the oppression strong.
Crime is the parent of each craven fear;
Crime drowns the voice of courage in our ear;
Of vile hypocrisy for safety asks,
The coward's shelter, and the bad man's mask.
THE AUTHOR.

Our readers have not forgotten that when the apostate monks, Bernardo and St. Clair, descended to the prison vaults of the abbey, with the intention of releasing the wounded Fritz, they could discover no trace of him. The Landskeneter had mysteriously disappeared. Not only did they search the cell in which they left him, but the adjoining ones, till the approach of day warned them to provide for their own safety. The penalty of their broken vows appalled them. They could have braved anything but that.

The abbot had spoken truly when he assured our hero and Friar Julio that there was one dungeon within the walls the entrance to which was known only to himself and Brother Hugo, the aged jailer—the vault of Irmin—so named from the column of Irminseule—the idol of the superstitious Saxons which had been concealed there by Charlemagne. The conqueror was far too politic to destroy it publicly; such an insult to their secretly cherished faith would have driven his half civilized subjects to rebellion.

Solitude is a terrible monitor—a test few natures can withstand. Its first effect is terror; then the still small voice of conscience begins to make itself heard—not in the thunder tones which sometimes startle men in the very act of crime, but in low, suggestive whisperings, borne on the wings of fear, which never yet produced true repentance.

Fritz was in the first of these stages—terror. The solitude of his prison-house unnerved him. No companionship but the hideous head of the idol, whose glassy eyes seemed to be ever fixed upon him from the top of the monolith, without human form. Stone, nothing but stone. The idol was of stone, the walls of stone, the couch on which he sometimes slept was of stone—everything was stone. No wonder that he felt as if he were gradually turning into granite himself.

Fritz was sleeping, and the dreams of the past were upon him.

Distinctly, as in a mirror, he saw himself marching along the banks of the Rhine, under the command of Azon, who wore the disguise of a simple squire. Next, they overtook a litter, escorted by a single knight and a few men-at-arms. An attack was made, the litter overturned, and its defenders dispersed.

Twice did he see his ferocious leader plunge his dagger between the shoulders of a helpless child, who clung to him screaming for protection.

Then followed the arrival of a mail-clad noble, at the head of a considerable body of troops, too numerous to be routed.

At a signal from their leader the assassins fled, and all seemed confused and dark again.

Great was his surprise when he awoke. At the foot of the mystic column he perceived the form of the dwarf, his eyes riveted upon him with that fixed expression which, at times, is more embarrassing than the gaze of scorn or hate. At first the wretched man imagined that he was still dreaming, and closed his eyes to shut out the vision.

On opening them again he felt convinced that something palpable, living and human stood before him, though how it had obtained an entrance to his prison cell he could not divine, the only visible opening being the grated aperture in the ceiling, through which a dim, subdued light was streaming.

"Who and what are you?" he faltered.

"I am here to announce your doom," replied Alf, in his low, musical voice.

"I can guess it," said the Lanskeneter. "The axe or cord. It was scarcely worth while to cure me of my wounds for such an end."

"Priests shed no blood," observed the visitor, gravely.

"I have heard so. They affect to be merciful, and use other means, but the result is still the same. Are you a priest?" he added.

"No."

"Do not keep me in suspense," exclaimed the prisoner; "it is harder to endure than pain, or even solitude. Here death has lost half its terrors."

"But not all."

"Not all," replied Fritz, impatiently. "Let me know the worst. It cannot wring me more than the ceaseless, gnawing doubts of my tired heart that render sleep hideous, the dreams of my tired brain, which recall the past—menacing shadows."

His hearer shuddered.

"Fear not," added the speaker, "to announce it. I can endure it."

"Your sovereign lord, the high and mighty Azon, Palsgrave of the Rhine, has sent courteous message to the Abbot of Corbey, requesting you may be given up to him, to be tried in his own court for any offence you may have committed."

"And the answer?"

"Has not yet been given."

"He has no right to demand me. He cannot drag me hence," exclaimed the captain, greatly excited. "I am in the Abbey of Corbey, and that is sanctuary."

"Not unless the abbey grants it."

"He will grant it," continued the Lanskeneter. "He must grant it; it is his interest to grant it, and priests know their interests. Besides, Azon is his enemy; he knows that, too. Tell him to protect me and I will place within his hand a terrible weapon of defence."

These disjointed words broke from the speaker with an earnestness which proved the intensity of his fears.

"You can do this thing?" replied Alf, in a tone of incredulity more or less real. "You, a man stained with crimes and blood-guiltiness! You whom his sovereign lord has demanded for punishment! Who would believe you?"

"No one," said Fritz, becoming more calm.

"You can see that?"

"But all would believe the proofs that I could give."

"That you have been in the Palsgrave's confidence," observed the dwarf, "I do not doubt; but the instrument is worn out and he discards it, not from fear, but simply because he has no further use for it. I know his highness well."

"But not as well as I do," added the terrified wretch. "You have never been admitted to his most secret counsel; aided him to perpetrate his cruel schemes; know not the mysteries of the accursed den he calls his castle."

"All of them," said Alf, with a quiet smile.

The captive shook his head incredulously.

"The secret dungeon in which so many victims have found a lingering death," continued the speaker; "the winding passages threading the hollow walls; the massive column which conceals the spiral staircase; the hall of judgment; the yielding floor which, dividing at the touch of a spring, precipitates the accused into the fearful cavity below, where wheels armed with revolving scythes, by the same accursed mechanism, soon end the wretches' sufferings.

"All these things have long been known to me; even to the oubliettes through which the bodies of the dead are washed away."

As the speaker proceeded slowly to unfold his knowledge of the secrets of the castle of Azon the countenance of his hearer underwent a marked change. It was not terror alone that might have been read there, but astonishment mingled with something like awe.

"To know these things," he said, "you must have seen them."

"I have seen them," replied Alf, "and other mysteries of which you dream not of."

"And yet you live?"

"And yet I live," repeated Alf.

"To do so you must be more than mortal," observed Fritz.

The dwarf smiled.

"Not so," he replied. "I am human—in some respects, as you perceive, less favored than yourself;" he alluded to his stunted growth; "a little less sinful, perhaps, but of that I boast not. Man should never boast."

"You say that you are human," said the captive, "and yet knowing these things as you have proved, you could consign me to the mercy of a tyrant who never felt one throb of pity; whose heart is dead to every sentiment of remorse; who will listen to my last groans with a cold, demoniac satisfaction and gloat over the torments to which his will condemn me."

It was shrewdly put, and his hearer, seeing that he had brought him to the state of mind he wished, sought not to prolong the terrors he had inspired.

"I will repeat what you have said to the Lord Abbot of Corbey, who alone can decide your destiny. Should he decline to exercise the high privilege of his office and refuse your prayer for sanctuary—"

"I am lost," interrupted Fritz, despairingly.

"Not so," continued the former speaker; "there is yet another chance of safety."

"Name it! O, name it!" exclaimed Fritz, eagerly.

"Assume the habit of St. Benedict."

"What! become a monk! wear a shroud before I am ready for the grave!" exclaimed the Lanskeneter; "exchange the free air, the excitement of the battle-field for the cold shade of these cloistered walls! Never! Never! Any fate but that!"

"It is yours to choose or to reject," observed the dwarf, calmly; "I did but suggest it. I took you for a man of intelligence, but am mistaken. The robe which you despise may be unattractive. I know it is of the coarsest cloth, hard to the flesh, distasteful to the eye; but it has this advantage—it is lined with safety."

Fritz started.

"Its wearer," added the speaker, "can be judged only by the church, ever an indulgent mother to her children."

His hearer stood lost for several minutes in reflection.

"Is there no other way?" demanded his hearer.

"I know of none. Farewell."

"Stay!" exclaimed the captive, with sudden resolution. "I accept."

"Accept!" repeated his visitor. "Entreat, you mean."

"Yes! yes! entreat."

"I will present your request to the reverend abbot," said Alf. "And the proofs you spoke of?"

"Must be revealed to him alone."

"Be it so. I am not curious. Follow me in silence and humility."

The speaker threw a thick mantle, which hung upon his arm, over the head of Fritz, and led him to the foot of the column of Irminseule, which by pressing a powerful spring concealed in the grotesque carvings, moved aside, discovering a flight of narrow steps. Down these he led him.

For some time the prisoner and his guide traversed the long, winding, damp passages cut in the solid rock. At last they began to ascend.

"We are arrived," said the latter, removing the mantle from his head, and unbinding the arms of the Lanskeneter, who found himself in one of the side chapels of the abbey church, where the abbot and legate, wearing their stoles, were seated in front of the altar, ready to hear his confession. It was long and terrible. Ere it commenced the dwarf withdrew.

As the penitent concluded the long catalogue of his and the Palsgrave's crimes, the countenances of both the churchmen expressed indignation and horror, yet not unmixed with triumph.

It is time that we returned to the two maidens, Elgitha and Louise, who were still in safety in the sanctuary of Charlemagne.

They were not alone. Two religious women had been appointed to attend and serve them. They were as completely isolated from the world as if they had taken the vail. No male feet, with the exception of the legate's or the abbot's, might pass the threshold. When we said isolated, the word scarcely described the position, seeing that a strongly grated window gave them a view of the interior of the church, and enabled them to assist at the ceremonies. By means of this window Roland could communicate with his betrothed, and, lover-like, he was not slow to avail himself of the opportunity.

Elgitha and her friend were seated at a small table, on which the food remained almost untasted. The former gave a deep-drawn sigh. Louise looked up, and, despite her own sorrow, tried to cheer her friend.

"We must not be ungrateful," she said. "To be sure, our retreat is dull enough to frighten an owl, but it might be worse. Here at least we are in safety. What," she added, "can be the motives of the Palsgrave's bitter enmity to you?"

"Heaven knows. I nothing know. I cannot even guess it. I never saw him till the fatal visit to Ragenstein and the tournament to which we both looked forward with so much pleasure. Perhaps it is for his son."

"Yes," replied Louise. "I, too, have thought of that, but dismissed it from my mind; for, if report does not err, but slight affection existed between them. Nor can it be to avenge his death, for when Azon made his infamous accusations against you Rodolph was living. If he feels regret, it is for his heir, not for his son."

"I am most unhappy," said Elgitha. "Blood has been shed on my account," she added, with a shudder.

"Banish such thoughts. The wretch deserves his fate who seeks to trample upon our sex. God designed men to be our natural protectors and support, not to be oppressors. Why else did He endow them with superior strength? Were I Roland," she added, "the death of my insolent rival would sit but lightly on my soul."

"Oh, Louise! Louise!"

"It is the truth. Men cease to be men when they turn their strength against us."

For several minutes neither of the maidens spoke. Elgitha appeared absorbed in deep reflection. The subject of her thoughts must have been a painful one, for the tears coursed one another down her pale, innocent face fast and freely.

"I have been thinking," she faltered at last, in that hesitating tone of voice which denotes a mind balancing between some half-formed purpose and a fixed resolve, "whether the Palsgrave might not forego his persecution of me and of those who love me, provided I consent to—to—"

Here her courage gave way, and the poor girl bowed her head in a paroxysm of the wildest sorrow.

"Consented to what, dearest?" whispered her friend, tenderly.

"To renounce the world and retire to the obscurity of a cloister. That surely might satisfy his hatred."

Louise, who had been kneeling beside her, started to her feet, her eyes, usually so gentle in their expression, flashing with indignation.

"No!" she exclaimed. "A hundred times, no! It would be weak, cowardly, almost wicked, for it would not be following the vocation of your heart. You would not be the only sufferer. It would destroy the happiness of Roland, who loves you so devotedly, as well as your own. His happiness, did I say? His life; for both depend upon his one day calling you his own. Nor would the sacrifice be pleasing to Heaven, which accepts no reluctant vows. They should be free and voluntary."

"Alas! Alas! I have not your courage."

"Have the courage of your love, and you will find it sufficient," said Louise. "What! You, the affianced bride of one of the noblest knights of fatherland, to break the trusting heart that lives but in your smiles? Never! Never!"

"I thought but to save him. What else can I do to soften the malice of our enemies?"

"Die with him," replied her friend, embracing her, "if Heaven so wills it. I, your sister, tell you so. I who never felt an unkind thought towards you, whose friendship commenced in childhood, and can end only in the grave—I would rather strew flowers upon your bier than see you consign yourself to a living tomb."

"You have made me feel the sacrifice impossible," replied Elgitha. "It would do no good. I should but break the faithful heart that loves me. Yes, yes," she added, "death by the side of Roland would be sweet indeed."

"Forgive the boldness of my words," said Louise, "affection prompted them. Besides, we need not despair. We are in sanctuary. The abbot will not give us up. We have true hearts and strong arms to defend us."

"I thought not of myself," observed her friend, with a sigh.

"I know that, dearest, for you were never selfish. Something, I cannot tell what it is, tells me that our trials will end happily, and then—"

"You will realize *your* dream of a cloister," said Elgitha, with a faint smile.

Louise blushed, and hesitated a little before making a reply.

"Most probably," she answered, "but recollect I have made no vow. Besides," she added, "you might still require me by your side to fight life's battles with you."

"And I shall win them," replied the mourner, gathering courage from those inspiring words. "With such a counsellor to guide me, I begin to feel shame at my despondency. The future is before me. I have youth and love. Roland also has a true friend, Otto of Zelle, to aid him."

At the name of Otto, Louise cast down her eyes. Possibly she did not wish the speaker to notice the blush which suddenly crimsoned her fair cheek.

A slight noise broke off the conversation between the two maidens. It proceeded from the grated window looking into the church already described, and sounded as if the hilt of a dagger had been struck against the iron bars. It was the signal by which our hero and his friend announced their presence in the sacred edifice.

Louise and Elgitha started from their seats, and a smile, pure and innocent as the first dream of love, appeared on the countenance of each.

"That is as it should be," observed Louise. "Poor Roland! his heart will feel doubly sad if he sees you have been weeping."

"You must smile again," she added.

"It will not be so difficult," was the reply, "since you have given me hope. My heart is strengthened."

"And your courage?"

"Fear not; it will not fail me again. I have found it in my love."

And the speakers, their arms encircling each other, directed their steps to the window of the *sanctuary, from which an unexpected scene met* their sight.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I have no faith, sirs, in enforced vows,
In which repentance hath but little part;
He to whom all are made, He only knows
Which spring from fear, which from the contrite
heart.
CREAN, BY THE AUTHOR.

The great church of the Abbey of Corbey was decked with unusual splendor, as if for the celebration of some important ceremony. A profusion of wax tapers blazed from the high altar, on which jeweled reliquaries had been disposed to the veneration of the faithful.

The monks were in the choir—the members of the chapter seated in their stalls, cold and impassible as the statues of the saints, which, from their niches, frowned above them.

The abbot, dressed in his robes of state, occupied the abbatial throne, close to which stood the legate, dressed in the simple habit of a brother of St. Benedict. No cross or ensign denoted his high office, and yet his voice throughout Germany was that of the then universal church. As yet he was known only to the assembled brotherhood, who gazed upon him with feeling of respect and awe, especially those who, by their treacherous practices, had incurred the penalty his lips alone were authorized to pronounce.

Facing the altar stood a low bier, covered with a sable pall, beneath whose heavy folds the outlines of a human form might have been traced.

"An interment," whispered Elgitha.

"Not so, dearest," replied her lover. "The priests are decked in their richest vestments. It must be for the reception of a new brother to their order."

The vast edifice was filled, not only by the nobles and knights allied to the abbot, but by his vassals and dependents. Amongst others were the messengers of the Palsgrave, commanded by a knight named Hendricks, and distinguished by the wolf crest upon their iron helmets. They stood in a group apart, awaiting the conclusion of the ceremony to receive their answer to the demand he had made.

Hendricks began to feel a slight uneasiness. He was somewhat less ignorant and brutal than his companions, and had a vague suspicion of what was about to follow.

At the termination of the mass two of the lay brothers drew aside the pall—or death-cloth, as it was named in those days—from the bier, discovering the gaunt figure of Fritz, clothed in a coarse linen dress, not unlike a shroud, a heavy wooden cross clasped in his trembling hands. His feet were bare, the head closely shaved, showing the animal, bullet-like formation of the skull.

The wretched neophyte looked bewildered; the low, monotonous chants of the choir which for an hour he had been listening to had unnerved him, and the world, whose pleasures he was about to renounce, appeared more enticing than ever. Vainly did he cast his eyes around in the hope of discovering some means of escape; every avenue appeared barred. At last they fell upon Hendricks, who had long been his rival for the favor of Azon. The triumphant glance of the Lanskeneter restored his wavering resolution.

Gliding from the bier, he walked firmly to the foot of the abbatial throne, and bowing thereto, stood motionless before it.

A long pause ensued. The reply came at last.

"What seekest thou?" demanded the abbot.

"The pardon of my sins."

"The church is ever open to the truly penitent."

"And the habit of St. Benedict, to confirm me in my good intentions," added the postulant. "A protection against the allurements of the world, my own naturally corrupt earthly nature, and as a means of working out my redemption."

"Hast thou read the statutes of our sainted father and founder?"

"I have, most reverend lord."

"Knowest thou the penalty of thy broken vows?" he added.

"It has been revealed to me," answered the neophyte, with a shudder.

"Dost thou still persevere?"

"Still I persevere in my supplication," said Fritz. "The mercy of Heaven, whose goodness has been lately vouchsafed to me, the sincerity of my repentance for the errors of my past life, and the example of this holy community will keep me in the straight path."

"This is terrible," whispered Louise to Otto of Zelle, as they stood apart, not to overhear the conversation of the two lovers. "Look in the countenance of the man; earthly passions are impressed in every line of his coarse features. He will break his vow."

"I fear so," replied the young knight, in the same undertone.

"And what is the penalty?"

"None know exactly, but the sons of the saint; but it is generally thought to be death."

The fair girl became suddenly pale.

"Otto, dear friend," she added, "do not you become a brother of St. Benedict when you retire from the world."

"Little danger of that," said Otto. "I have as much vocation as I ever had; but shall choose a less rigid order."

"What order?"

"You must decide on that. Recollect the compact between us: that *when* we do retire from the world, we retire together."

A long pause ensued after the postulant had replied to the last question addressed to him. All might have read a painful hesitation in the usually placid countenance of the abbot, who well knew by what means the mind of the rough Lanskeneter had been wrought upon; possibly he trembled for his future fate.

Grave and dear interests at last decided him, and rising from his throne he pronounced that the prayer of the suppliant was granted.

As the last words escaped his lips, the loud, triumphant jubilate broke from the choir and echoed through the long drawn aisles of the sacred edifice till it died away in faint murmuring tones, sounding more like a funeral dirge than the solemn strains of the august hymn in which the church announces its joy.

As we are not writing an account of the rites and ceremonies of the ancient church, we shall pass over what followed, merely stating that the vows were received, the habit given and the rough soldier duly admitted a brother of the order of St. Benedict. As he passed down the nave in procession with the rest of the community, his glance encountered a second time that of his old rival and enemy; but it was without quailing. He felt that a powerful shield had been extended over him.

The messenger of the Palsgrave merely smiled; he judged the new-made brother probably much more correctly than he judged himself.

"Tell your sovereign lord," said the abbot, "what you have witnessed. The bonds of his vassal are broken. I may not surrender him; he belongs only to the church, and the church knows how to protect its own."

Hendricks bowed silently. He was far too prudent to brave the anathema which a word of defiance might have provoked. An hour afterwards he quitted the abbey, and in three days reached the valley where the troops of the emperor and Azon were encamped, in company with a body of stout men-at-arms under the command of Conrade the Archbishop of Cologne, the force of the Duke of Baden being slightly in advance.

A dark cloud passed over the countenance of the Palsgrave as he listened to the intelligence. The storm which for so many years had been silently gathering at a distance appeared about to burst over him. Twice did he cause his messenger to describe the scene he had witnessed and then dismissed him with a wave of his hand. He wished to be alone.

Hendricks felt only too glad to escape without reproof for the failure of his mission.

For several instants the tyrant paced the limits of his tent, brooding over the blow he had so unexpectedly received. Had the abbot refused to give up his vassal to his resentment it would not have greatly surprised him, but that he should receive him into the community still respected and strong in the superstition of the people, alarmed him. Better not have claimed his victim than see him escape thus. It alarmed him.

"O, these priests!" he muttered, "these priests! It is unwise to meddle with them. Like the fabled hydra, cut off as many of their heads as you will, a yet greater number will appear, young, fresh, and vigorous, armed with increased venom. Impossible to slay them."

Having decided on the line of policy to pursue, the Palsgrave summoned Hendricks once more to his presence.

"So you have failed," he said, as the Lanskeneter stood trembling in his presence.

"Alas! yes, dread lord; but the fault has not been—"

"I am not blaming you," interrupted his master. "Silence—not a word; but listen to my instructions."

Hendricks bowed, and stood mute as a statue before him.

"Have you breathed to any living creature the result of your errand to Corbey?" added the speaker.

"To no one, your highness."

"And the men who accompanied you?"

"Have been equally dumb."

"Are you assured of that?"

"Certain," answered the Lanskeneter. "I cautioned them in your name, and they dread the penalty of disobedience too well to risk it."

Azon smiled grimly.

"Good!" he said. "The knaves know me. Listen to me, Hendricks. Choose twelve of the bravest men of your troop, and let them guard the litter safely to my castle. Give out as you proceed that Fritz is in it. You understand me?"

"Perfectly, Prince."

"Carry out my instructions faithfully, and, above all, successfully, and hasten your return, and I will reward you beyond your expectations."

"Ah, my dread lord!" faltered his hearer.

"What is it, Hendricks?"

"Were I only assured that you were really not displeased at my want of success, my heart would be lighter and my courage stronger."

The Palsgrave laughed, but there was nothing genial in the sound. It lacked the ring of true heartiness—came from the lips alone. He saw that it did not reassure the man he intended to dupe, and changed his tactics.

"Why should I feel anger," he demanded, "where there is no just blame? Do you imagine I expected you to force the traitor Fritz from the protection of the abbot, with only six men-at-arms to second you? Absurd! The abbey is well fortified, I presume?"

"Strongly, your highness."

"And well defended?"

"At a rough guess, by nearly a thousand men, to say nothing of their lords, amongst whom I recognized the Lords of Emms and Ragenstein, Otto of Zelle, and Count Linseignen, with others whose names and rank I am not acquainted with."

"Look you, Hendricks. You bring me valuable intelligence, and yet suspect that I am dissatisfied with you. Here is a proof," added the tyrant, "to the contrary."

He tossed a well-filled purse to his messenger, who, together with Fritz, had been his accomplice in many a daring crime. Hence his wish to rid himself of the latter, and finally of both. Had he succeeded, the witnesses would have been silenced.

"Since it is your wish to remain," he continued, "I will not send you to the castle, as I intended. Another shall take your place. I can understand that when great deeds are to be accomplished, honors and gold to be won, a brave man like yourself wishes to share in them.

"You shall remain with me, since you desire it."

"Ah, my dread lord!" exclaimed Hendricks, kneeling and kissing his hand, "command me. I would die to save you."

Azon regarded him for a few seconds in silence.

"I believe you," he said at last.

"You may," added the reassured ruffian. "The words came from my heart."

"Does the fool think to gull me?" murmured the arch dissembler to himself. "Gratitude! idiots alone place any faith in it; wise men laugh the word to scorn. I know a surer way."

Touching his vassal upon the shoulder, he continued aloud, in a familiar tone:

"To prove my confidence, the post the coward Fritz has forfeited is yours. You shall command my faithful Lanskeneters. Work is to be done; lands will be confiscated; gold had for the gathering; gold, the key to every pleasure. The emperor leads us; before the eagle banner these shavelings, who, whilst safe within their walls, boast so largely, will bow the head and sue for pardon."

"We shall succeed!" exclaimed Hendricks, enthusiastically.

"We will—will succeed," repeated the tempter. "Fools to think the world can be governed by ideas. Force is the ruling power. Were it within the limits of the red land, Corbey, that nest of treason, should be levelled with the earth."

At this indirect allusion to the dreaded Vehme his hearer shuddered. It had not been made without intention; all Suabia trembled at the name; and the speaker was generally believed to be one of its chiefs.

"Now then, away!" continued Azon. "Dispatch the empty litter as I directed; spread everywhere the report that Fritz is in my power. There is a policy in this I need not now explain. In the morning, in presence of my troops, the appointment shall be confirmed. When they see how nobly I reward devotion in my service their zeal will be redoubled."

The new commander of the Lanskeneters, after renewing his protestations of fidelity, quitted the tent rejoicing.

A few hours later the forces of Conrade, Archbishop of Cologne, and the Duke of Baden, arrived to join those of the emperor. When the Palsgrave saw the leaders riding side by side, a dark suspicion entered his heart.

"The traitors!" he muttered to himself.

Had they been plotting treason to the cause, or were they truly loyal? He would have given much to tell. At a council held that same night in the tent of Henry, it was decided to advance at once against Corbey.

They were still some twelve leagues distant.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

—There are none that fall so unpitied as those that have raised themselves upon the spoils of the public.

FROM PILLAR TO POST.

The Story of an Outcast.

By MAJOR ALFRED ROCHEFORT.

[In order that *new* readers of the *Ledger* may begin with the following installment of this story, and understand it just the same as though they had read it all from the beginning, we here give a synopsis of that portion of it which has already been published: The hero, known as Paul Wells, was in fact Oliver Nostrand, whose parents died in California when he was a child, and left him to the care of a cousin, Oscar Roland, a New York merchant then in San Francisco. Roland, wishing to get possession of his dead cousin's large estate, bargained with Asa Tupper, a mate of one of his own vessels, to carry the boy off and compass his death. Roland's wife and only child had perished in the wreck of the steamer in which they were going to San Francisco. Roland turned Nostrand's estate into money and returned to New York, where he became a prosperous citizen. His twin brother, Paul Roland, was a banker, and a man of most estimable disposition. He had an idolized adopted daughter, named Dora, who had been left when an infant on his doorstep, and who supposed herself to be the actual daughter of Paul and his wife. Nearly twenty years after Oscar Roland returned from California, Asa Tupper called on him, and informed him that the boy, Oliver Nostrand, whom he had supposed to be dead, was in his (Roland's) own employ, under the name of Paul Wells. Soon afterwards Paul was accused of passing counterfeit money, was speedily convicted, and sent to the Albany Penitentiary for two years. At the opening of our story he had just been discharged, and on returning to New York penniless, he fell in with an old ruffian named Slogger and a young adventurer named Ned Breeze, who took him to their abode in an old canal boat called the *Saucy Moll*, which was stranded not far from the residence of Paul Roland. There he met Asa Tupper and set the villain at defiance. Ned Breeze, finding that Paul—to whom he had taken a great liking—was determined to earn his living honestly, got him a situation in the establishment of Mr. Somers, with whom Ned was in high favor on account of his having saved the life of Mr. Somers's daughter, Maud, who was the bosom friend of Dora Roland. Oscar Roland had a sort of private detective and tool named Charly Carp, who at once informed him of the employment of Paul Wells by Mr. Somers. Oscar wanted Asa Tupper to put the young man out of the way, but Asa flatly refused to do so. He also tried to find out from Tupper who Dora's parents were, but although that villain said the mother of Dora had left her on Paul Roland's doorstep at his suggestion, he refused to reveal anything further except that Dora's father then stood high in the community, although he had deserted Dora's mother (then his wife) like a cur. Oscar was in love with Dora, and had determined to force his brother to give him her hand, or else let him go to financial ruin, on the brink of which he already stood. For this purpose he called at his brother's house, where he found Arthur Somers (Maud's brother), who was Dora's lover, and other young people. Leaving them in the parlor, he went into the library, where he found his brother with his face buried in his hands. What followed is told in the chapter below.]

CHAPTER VII.

THE BROTHERS.

"Any new developments to-day, Paul?" asked Oscar, as he drew a chair up to the fire in the library and sat down.

"When things are going to the bad there is nothing new but a change for the better," replied Paul, with a sigh.

"And there has been no change for the better?"

"Not the least."

"You are still able to meet all your obligations?"

"I will meet them while there is a penny left."

"How long can you hold out?" asked Oscar, still methodical in his inquiries.

"That depends on how I am pushed."

"Of course. Now, let me see; how much are you out up to date?"

"Considerably over a million of dollars."

"That is a great fortune."

"So it is, but if I weather the storm the most of it will come back."

"Perhaps so."

"I am sure of it."

"I never had as much faith in people as you, Paul, and I can't but think that I am better off for it. Father left us the same—"

"True, Oscar; but Oliver Nostrand left you a large fortune in California," interrupted Paul.

"To all of which I have added."

"And none of which I envy you."

"Let us come to business at once, Paul."

"As you say."

"How much will it take to place the bank in a safe position—safe beyond a peradventure?"

"Five hundred thousand dollars."

"Five—hundred—thousand dollars!" repeated Oscar, with the expression of a man completely astounded by the statement.

"It will take fully that, and I will add, I do not expect to get it; so I am quite prepared for the crash."

"Oh!" cried Oscar, hurriedly, "I am going to help you; that is what I am here to-night for; but I am startled at the amount."

"If you see fit to advance it I will give you whatever security is in my power. I want the transaction to be as business-like as possible under the circumstances."

"That is quite right. Now, let us look over the matter carefully," said Oscar.

The brothers drew up to a table and, after setting down many figures and making many memoranda, it was agreed that Paul should place all his property as security for the proposed loan in Oscar's hands for the time being.

This being agreed to, the brothers lapsed into silence for some minutes, during which Oscar busied himself drawing profiles with the pencil which he still held in his hand.

At length he looked up and asked, with the suddenness of one moved by an uncertain resolution:

"Have you thought over the other matter, Paul?"

"What other matter?"

"My proposal for Dora's hand. You surely cannot have forgotten our talk the night of her birthday?"

"I not only have not forgotten it," said Paul, "but I must confess that I have thought about it ever since."

"And what is your conclusion?"

"I have reached none."

"Have you spoken to Dora about it?"

"Spoken to Dora about it!" cried Paul.

"Yes."

"Why, Oscar Roland, I would as soon think of proposing to the child that we murder the woman whom she believes to be her mother, and that she shall then become my wife."

"If you are so delicate about it, why not let me speak to her?" asked Oscar, with a coolness that was in striking contrast with his brother's agitation.

"I forbid it, now, and forever!"

"You are excited."

"I am indignant."

"If you can afford to oppose me, all right; but I have set my heart on this, and your consent must be given, or I shall withdraw from the contract just now made, and to the fulfillment of which this is a condition."

"You are in earnest?" asked Paul, leaping to his feet.

"I am," said Oscar, firmly.

For reply, Paul Roland took the memorandum agreement as to the money, which his brother had signed and laid on the table, and tearing it into fragments, he threw it into the fire.

"If you can afford to do this, Paul, I presume I can also stand it."

"I know that I am making myself a beggar by the act, and that I am meeting for the last time, as a brother, the one man in the world with whom all my life has been blended."

Overcome with emotion, Paul Roland dropped into the chair from which he had risen in his excitement, and covered his face with his hands.

With the shadow of a sneer about his lips, Oscar replied:

"One would think, to hear you, that this girl is of your own flesh and blood."

"I could not love her more if she were. Since the hour her baby voice first echoed through these halls, as if appealing to the strange faces bending over the basket in which she was found at my door, she has grown into my heart, and into the heart of the woman she calls mother. We called her 'Dora'—daughter—and have carefully kept from her all knowledge of her uncertain origin—"

"But," interrupted Oscar, "the world has not been kept in equal ignorance. Her true relation to your family is a matter of notoriety, and sooner or later she must learn the truth for herself."

"Then it shall not be from my lips; and while I have the strength I shall do all in my power to prevent it."

"You are determined about this?"

"I am."

"And you fully comprehend the consequences?"

"Do not, I beg of you, insult my intelligence by intimating that I am not keenly aware of my own straits, and of your temptation. If you do not object, I shall consider that the object of your visit as settled," said Paul, and he rose with the chilling dignity of a man who has given a final answer to a disagreeable question, and now wishes to be rid of the questioner.

"As you will, Paul Roland," said Oscar, imitating his brother by rising; "but you should know me well enough to believe that even your opposition will not tend to swerve me from the accomplishment of a purpose on which I have set my heart."

"I should know you, and I thought I did," responded Paul; "but I now confess I know you not; and it is my desire to continue in ignorance of your true character."

"I shall leave, and give you time to think well of this. I need not suggest that it may be better if you keep the subject of this conversation from your wife and Dora."

"I am not eager to tell my wife and daughter of my brother's shame. Depend upon my secrecy," said Paul.

The young people were still singing in the parlors; and, as Oscar Roland passed from the library to the hall, he looked in to say good-night to the merry group.

He was a man of wonderful self-control, at least so far as his face and voice were concerned, for he shook hands with Arthur Somers, at parting, in a way that indicated high admiration and warm regard; and yet so bitterly jealous was he of the handsome young man that he could have killed him where he stood.

"Where to now, sir?" asked the driver, when Oscar Roland entered the carriage.

"Home," was the curt reply.

While the carriage stopped at the road for the driver to close the gates the sound of the cracked fiddle and the shouting of the drunken dancers came up from the shore where the *Saucy Moll* was permanently stranded.

The gates closed, the driver climbed up to his seat, and at the same instant a woman, who had come up from the canal boat, and whose slender form was but thinly clad, leaped lightly up behind, and clinging to the straps, was whirled away.

"I want you to drive me down to the office at nine o'clock instead of ten in the morning," said Oscar Roland to the driver, when he dismounted from the carriage before his own house.

"All right, sir," said the driver, and hurried off.

Oscar Roland's fingers were on the dead-latch key, and he was about to open the door, when he felt a hand on his shoulder, and turning, with an exclamation of alarm that sounded like an oath, he saw before him a woman in black, with a pale, pinched face, and eyes that looked burning black by the light of the two great lamps before the mansion.

"Who—who are you?" he demanded.

"Oscar Roland, look well at me before you say you have forgotten me," replied the woman.

"You are—you cannot be Ella—Ella—"

"Ella Roland! Have you forgotten the name you gave me, man? Did you think I would stay banished forever? I am here now, and here to stay. But it is cold," she said, with a shudder. "It is cold here, and your house is warm."

"Come in and let us talk," said Oscar Roland, opening the door.

CHAPTER VIII.

PAUL AND NED BREEZE ENTER ON A NEW LIFE.

Before entering on his duties in the warehouse of Somers and Son, Paul Wells resolved to do everything in his power to merit the respect and confidence of his employers.

And it can be truthfully said that his modesty, his steady industry, and his gentle, self-respecting deportment, won at once with the firm and the clerks with whom he was brought in contact.

Ned Breeze came to see him every evening at the dingy boarding-house, and at first he seemed very anxious to take his friend to the gallery of some cheap theatre to pass the hours before bedtime.

But Paul, who was a great lover of books, and all of whose inclinations were intellectual, thought he saw in Ned Breeze the possibilities of better things than his past life had produced.

He kept Ned, without much coaxing, in the little room over the liquor shop, and here he would read to him, till the young "pirate," as he called himself, saw gleams of light breaking through the fog of ignorance that had hitherto enveloped his brain.

He caught glimpses of a beautiful and undreamt-of world, and his bright, eager nature was aroused till he resolved to know more of it.

He could read a little and write less, and he never knew how he acquired this very limited ability.

He had often wished that he was well educated; not so much for the happiness culture brings—that was beyond his conception—but because he imagined he could use learning to advantage in the higher walks of crime, for to him crime was graded by its gains and the clothes which the criminal could afford to wear.

Ned Breeze smoked, "chawed," swore, and drank; and he frankly confessed to Paul that, when he thought it necessary, he "could tell a lie with any man in New York."

Ned was not a promising subject, but he was not naturally vicious or degraded.

Under the hard veneering of vice with which his debasing life had covered him there was a brave, generous heart, and a nature that would have been noble if properly directed or left to its own bent.

Ah me! Justice is well painted blind, for, otherwise, she would take into account the criminal's life, education and opportunities, and her judgments would be measured by the advantages of the culprit.

"Blow me, if I don't try to be a scholard!" exclaimed Ned, as he held Paul's hand one night at parting.

"I am glad to hear you say so, Ned; and if I can help you, you know I shall be only too glad."

"An' you think I can learn, Paul, just as well as you?"

"I am sure of it, Ned."

"Then hang me if I don't try. You know I 've had that in my mind ever since I saved Miss Dora Somers. I 've often thought, since then, that if I was rich an' larned that she wouldn't have offered me money, but she 'd a kinder invited me round to the house, an' I 'd a talked to her on the sofy, an' she 'd a sanged on the pianer for me."

"That would have been very pleasant, Ned," said Paul, with one of those rare smiles that lit up his face and made him strikingly handsome.

"Pleasant, ole feller! Why, blow me, it 'd be heaven! But, I say, I think mebbe it be better if you an' me was to bunk together, an' I changed my racket an' played straight."

"I don't clearly understand you, Ned."

"That 's cause you aint up in my lingo. Now here 's the lay o' the land, as Tupper says."

Ned sat down again, and said that Paul's present boarding-house was the resort of thieves, and that Tupper and Slugger were there very frequently.

He suggested that they rent two furnished rooms, where they could sleep, and, if need be, do their own cooking.

"If you agree to this, Paul, I 'll turn right in to larnin', an' I 'll keep the rooms in order; an' as to the cooking, I 'll bet a million dollars in hard cash, or put up due bills for the same, that there aint a pot-slinger on the island as can get up a bullier meal 'n me, on the same slim amount o' fixin's."

"I will join in with you heartily, Ned, if—"

"If what?"

"If you give up your present mode of life, and take up some honest business."

"I thought that was comin', an' I was ready to say 'Yes.' W'y, I 's been dickerin' to-day to buy a news-stand from a one-armed feller near the ferry, an' I 've got the ducats to do it with. Now, is that all you want me to do? Speak right out, for as I 'm a changin' o' the lay o' my life, I might as well go the hull hog, as Tupper says."

"We can live cheaper if you give up smoking, drinking, and chewing."

"I 'll do it, an' I 'll begin right now," said Ned. And in proof of his sincerity and strength of purpose he took a quid of tobacco from his mouth, and after looking for a spittoon or a stove into which to cast it, he compromised with cleanliness by dexterously flipping it under the bed.

"Any more reformin' you 'd like to have done, Paul? Don't be mealy-mouthed, but spit it right out, as Peg says."

"I would give up swearing."

"The blazes! An' next thing you 'd want me to give up slang?"

"Yes, Ned."

"Then you 'd have me as dumb as a oyster an' as soft as a jelly fish. But I 'll tell you what I 'll do, Paul."

"What?"

"I 'll try."

Ned reached out his hand, and seeing the moisture of joy in Paul's eyes, he hurried out to hide his own weakness, and when he reached the street he darted into the shadows and coughed, and rubbed his eyes in the hollow of his arm.

Full of his resolution, Ned started off to spend his last night with Slogger and Peg on board the *Saucy Moll*.

He had not gone far when he found himself confronted by a man who moved from side to side, so as to block the way.

Checking the oath that rose to his lips, Ned looked up, and, by the light of the lamp under which he was halted, he saw the red, smiling face of Charly Carp.

Charly Carp knew the criminal classes of New York, and he was also well known to them as "Oscar Roland's private detective."

He was apparently the most cheery and open-hearted of men, full of jokes and brimming over with good-fellowship; but under the glamour of heartiness there was a cool, crafty and even a cruel nature.

"Why, Ned, old man!" exclaimed Charly Carp, as he laid his big soft hand on Ned's broad shoulders, "you are just the chap I've been looking for."

"And, now that you 've found me, w'at do you want?" asked Ned, shaking off the hand and standing erect and defiant.

"To talk to you."

"Well, blaze away; my hearin's good. But as I 'm in a hurry, cheese it cully."

"Let us step into a saloon and have a drink while we talk."

"I aint drinkin' to-night."

"Then sit down and watch me drink for both," laughed Charly Carp, as he took Ned's arm and led him into the liquor shop directly under Paul's lodgings.

It was a long, low room, dimly lit with kerosene lamps, the floor covered with saw dust, and groups of men sitting at little tables, unmindful of the foul odor which the smoke of many pipes increased.

Ned Breeze had often been here before, and now, as he entered, the thick-necked bar-tender nodded to him, and Tupper and Slogger, at the further end of the room, called to him to join them, but he pointed to Charly Carp and shook his head.

"I hear this Paul Wells and you are very thick," said Charly Carp, when they were seated.

"Well, s'posin' we are?" replied Ned.

"Oh, I 've no objections; indeed, I 'm glad of it—"

"An' s'posin' you wasn't glad, w'at the blazes 'd I keer?"

"Not the least bit in the world, Ned, for, as I often say to Slogger, and as I told Tupper only this evening, there aint a brighter nor an independenter young fellow on the river than Ned Breeze." Then, with a sudden change of manner, Carp asked: "Don't you want to make some money?"

"Of course I does. Wot do you take me for?"

"You can make it easy."

"How much, an' how easy?"

"Well, a hundred dollars to start off with."

"Pay half of it down," said Ned, reaching out his hand.

"I 'll give you twenty down, if you agree to do what I say, for I know you are a man of your word."

"Fork over the money; I agree in advance."

Charly Carp handed Ned a twenty-dollar bill, and then leaning his elbows on the table and bringing his face closer to his companion's, he developed his plan.

It was that Ned should live with Paul Wells for some time, say a month. That he should take him round to all the dens at night and have him seen in the company of well-known criminals. And, further, that he should get the youth to drink, and, if possible, to make him drunk.

The money necessary for this Charly Carp promised to supply, and he pledged himself, if "the job worked well," to double the amount first stipulated.

After appearing to deliberate for some time, Ned Breeze agreed to do this, and made an engagement with Carp for the following evening at the same place.

Ned went down to the dock where he had left his boat, and rowed up to the *Saucy Moll*.

He found Peg Slogger on board, talking with the pale-faced, black-eyed woman who had followed Oscar Roland from the gate of his brother's house.

"This is Mrs. Mason," said Peg, by way of introduction.

Ned coughed and bowed, but the woman rose, and, taking his hand, she asked:

"Do you remember me, Ned?"

"I can't exactly say as I does," replied Ned.

"Ned 's growed awful tall an' good-lookin'," said Peg.

"Perhaps," said the strange woman, speaking in tones that denoted culture, "it is better that he should not remember. And yet, it is hard to think that those we have nursed and loved in their childhood, and whose memory is ever warm in our hearts, should so soon forget us when we are parted from them."

"W'y," said Ned, touched by "Mrs. Mason's" sad manner, "I wouldn't forget you nor go back on you, if I 'd ever seed you before."

"Of course not—of course not," said the woman.

Then she motioned to Peg, who left the room, and turning to Ned, she continued:

"I want to have a long talk with you; will you keep what I say secret for the present?"

"May I be hanged an' quartered if I don't," replied Ned.

CHAPTER IX.

DORA ROLAND LEARNS ALL.

Oscar Roland and "Somers and Son" were not rivals, though engaged in the same business.

Their relations, if not actually friendly—for Oscar was not a man who permitted friendships—were certainly very pleasant.

The heads of the houses often met each other on 'Change; and business frequently led them to each other's office.

In addition, they frequently met socially, for both were well known in society and moved in the very best circles.

It was not, therefore, a matter of surprise to see either gentleman dropping into the office of the other to interchange opinions about trade, and particularly at a time when all trade was so unsettled.

Mr. Somers, the senior, always took lunch at a well-known Broadway restaurant not far from his warehouse.

One noon, he was about to go out, when Oscar Roland entered the office, and said, after the usual greetings:

"By the way, Somers, it 's a long time since you and I lunched together; what do you say to our trying it to-day?"

"Agreed; on one condition."

"The condition is accepted; but I will hear it," laughed Oscar Roland.

"That you are my guest."

"Bless you; I 'll say 'yes' to that all the time."

While waiting for lunch to be served, and during the repast, they talked over the disturbed state of the money market, and, incidentally, Mr. Somers hinted at rumors, recently started in circulation, adverse to the strength and ability of Paul Roland's bank.

"I assure you, Somers," said Oscar Roland, as he prepared to light a cigar, "that there is not the slightest foundation for the rumors. Some time since, when things were at the worst, I feared that Paul—who is, as you know, a most liberal, generous fellow—might be pressed. I had an interview with him and offered him five hundred thousand dollars, but he refused it with a show of anger, so, I think I can say, he is as solid as a rock."

Mr. Somers expressed his delight at this good news from an authority so reliable, and declared that if Oscar had not made this offer he would.

"For," he said, "I do not mind telling you, Roland, that my son, Arthur, has proposed to your niece, Dora, and has been accepted."

As Mr. Somers was lighting his cigar, and said this between the puffs, he did not see the start his companion gave on hearing the news.

"Of course," he managed to say at length, "Arthur is quite familiar with Dora's antecedents?"

"You mean about her being an adopted child?"

"Yes, and the manner in which she came into my brother's keeping."

"Oh, yes; but Arthur loves the girl as well as if she had an undisputed genealogy reaching back to the flood. He 's a sensible fellow, and marries the girl for herself, irrespective of her grandfathers."

"Of course, it is not announced, or I should have been among the first to hear of it; but, in advance of that formality, I congratulate all concerned, and drink to their good health," said Oscar Roland, raising his half filled wine glass to his lips.

After talking some minutes longer, Mr. Somers glanced at his watch, and picked up the check the waiter had laid beside his plate.

"A word before you go, Somers," said Oscar Roland, flipping the ashes from his cigar and motioning to detain his companion.

"A thousand words, if you wish to," said Mr. Somers. "I am not hurried."

"In passing through your warehouse to-day I saw a young man, who, some years ago, was in my employ. Let me see; what is his name?"

"Fletcher?"

"No."

"Dixon; we have two brothers of that name?"

"No; it is Paul—Paul—well, I never could remember names."

"Paul Wells?"

"Ah, yes, Paul Wells; that 's the fellow. How long have you had him?"

Mr. Somers told how long Paul Wells had been in his employ, and how he came to engage him, and then asked:

"What do you know about the young man? He seems to be very efficient."

"He is very bright—too bright," said Oscar Roland.

"Did you discharge him?"

"No; the Government took him from me."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that while in my service he was caught passing counterfeit money. He was arrested, and on searching his rooms a lot of the stuff was found in his possession. He was offered his liberty if he would inform on his confederates, but he played what they called the innocent dodge from first to last and went to the penitentiary for two years. His time expired only a short time since."

Mr. Somers was shocked by this information, and declared his intention to discharge the ex-convict at once.

At parting he thanked Oscar Roland for having told him this; and Oscar Roland delivered a little lecture on the care that should be taken in inquiring into the character of employees.

Oscar Roland's business ran so smoothly that he was always able to leave his office about three in the afternoon, when he would go home, change his dress, and go out for a drive either in the park or along the boulevards beyond.

On reaching his own house this day he was not a little surprised at seeing his brother's carriage standing before the door, for he had not spoken to Paul since their stormy meeting at the latter's house.

Meeting Mrs. Fry, the housekeeper, in the hall, he asked, in a whisper:

"Who came in the carriage?"

"Miss Dora."

"Did she come alone?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where is she now?"

"In the library."

"Please to say that I will see her in a few minutes."

Oscar Roland was always scrupulously neat in his person, and his dress, without being conspicuous, was always in the fashion. But now he hastened to his room and made such changes as he imagined would add to the attractiveness of his handsome person.

He found Dora pale and evidently troubled, and he guessed the reason at once.

She always kissed him at meeting or parting, and she made no exception of this time.

"You do not look well, Dora. What is the matter?" asked Oscar Roland, as he drew up his chair so that he could see every expression of her beautiful eyes.

Composing herself with an effort, for she was much agitated, Dora told her story.

She had been informed by her mother that morning of the desperate state of her father's business, and the fact that he must announce the suspension of the bank in a few days, if he did not get help.

"You know how proud father is," she continued; "and believing that he had not told you of his affairs, I came round, Uncle Oscar, to ask you to help him."

"I know, and have known, of my brother's affairs for some time, Dora. Don't start, and think me cruel."

"But why have you not spoken to father?" she asked, eagerly.

"I have spoken to him, and offered him help."

"And he refused?"

"He did; point blank."

"But you will not heed that? He is sad and troubled; and you will go to him?"

"If anything in the world would make me go, dear Dora, it would be your request; but you certainly could not have heard of the misunderstanding I had with Paul?"

"No, no; I heard nothing about it. He could not have thought it a misunderstanding."

"I knew of his affairs, and offered to advance him five hundred thousand dollars," said Oscar, emphasising the amount.

"And he refused your offer?"

"He did, Dora."

"What reason could he give?"

"No reason; but he had an excuse which I suppose satisfied himself. I may say," said Oscar, averting his face, "that you were concerned in it."

"I, Uncle Oscar?"

"Yes, you, Dora."

"But, how? I fail to comprehend," she said, bending towards him for a reply.

"It is a family secret, in which you are most deeply interested; so I fear to tell you without your urgent request."

"But how can I be interested in a thing I know nothing about? I have no secrets from my parents, nor have they from me."

"That is, of course, your belief. But I told my brother that you were now old enough to know the truth, and I further said that my love for you was so great that I would not continue to deceive you as we had agreed to do when you were a child."

"To deceive me when I was a child?" she repeated, and her eyes took on an expression of horror and the color fled her red lips.

"Yes, but I cannot tell you unless I am urged."

"But I do urge you," she said, hoarsely, "and if it be my secret I demand to know it."

"Wait till another time, Dora; you are not strong," said Oscar Roland, with well-assumed tenderness.

"I am strong, and if there is anything to be told I want to hear it now."

"And you will promise not to repeat what I have told you, at least for the present?"

"I promise anything," she said, desperately, for her fears were aroused and her curiosity excited beyond expression.

Adroitly preparing the way by assuring her of his love, which assurance he sought to enforce by laying his hand softly on the little fingers, clasping the side of her chair, Oscar Roland, with the coolness of a surgeon laying bare the muscles of a corpse, told the poor girl the story of her early life and unknown origin.

As he went on she made no comment, though the look of horror deepened in her eyes, and he could feel the fingers, beneath his own warm palm, growing cold and clammy as the fingers of the dead.

Shred by shred he tore away the vail of beautiful delusion that, like a glorified haze, shut out the unremembered of her infancy.

When she came into that house, it was the house of her *uncle*. When she kissed Paul Roland good-by, before he went to his office that morning, she was kissing her dear, troubled *father*, with a love deep and strong as ever poured from a daughter's heart to make glad a parent's life.

When she kissed Mrs. Roland before leaving The Oaks a short hour before she was kissing the dearest *mother* Heaven ever gave to a child, and their interests, and their hearts, and their souls were as blended as their hitherto happy lives had been.

When, the night before, she said "Yes" to Arthur Somers's vital question, and felt the first kiss of a first love on her lips, she believed, or would have believed had she given thought to the matter, that she was by birth, as in every other respect, the social equal of the noble youth to whom she gave her heart.

But now—now all was changed as if touched by the wand of some cruel genii.

The man who had undeceived her was no longer a kinsman, but a rich, haughty man, looking at her with pity.

The loved parents had vanished, though the love was intensified.

And in the brief agonized glance that she gave to her situation, she saw an insurmountable barrier rising up between herself and Arthur Somers, and she decided, on the moment, to insist on being released from the pledge she had given him.

Oscar Roland thought at one time that she would faint, but she bore up bravely; only the deepening of the ashy pallor on her lip and cheek and brow, and the agonized, imploring expression of the eyes, told of the wounds made in her gentle heart by his cruel words.

"Perhaps," she said, rising mechanically, "that it is better that you should have told me this. If my fa—father fails, I may be able to do, though not more willingly for the knowledge you have given me, a little to repay in part the everything he has done for me."

"You are a noble girl, Dora. And now make me a promise," said Oscar Roland, again taking her hand.

"What is it?"

"That you will keep what I have told you a secret, till I give you the liberty to speak."

"I have partly promised; but why should I do this?"

"Paul Roland's safety may depend on it."

"Then I promise," she said quickly.

"And you will further promise to come here again, in two days from this time?"

"And you have a reason for that?"

"I have. I will then ask you a question, and on your answer will depend your adopted father's wealth or poverty."

"Let me answer now," she implored.

"I cannot."

"But why not?"

"You have forced me to explain enough."

"Did I force you?" she asked, looking him, for the first time since he began the disclosure, full in the face.

"I—I so construed your request," he stammered.

"I shall come again in two days from this time," she said, as she turned to leave.

She did not reach out her hand, made no attempt at salutation, but walked with a measured step to the door.

He would have helped her to the carriage, but she avoided him. She got in and drew the blind; and when the carriage rolled away from the mansion it bore a girl who looked to be dead, for Dora Roland had fainted.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

—Nothing is truly infamous but what is wicked; and therefore shame can never disturb an innocent and virtuous mind.

IF I WERE YOU.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

If I were you, my precious maid,
In youthful, radiant charms arrayed,
I would not in each public place,
'Mid brazen crowd, display my face,
Nor laugh aloud, nor rudely stare
At others on the thoroughfare,
Nor flirt as many maidens do,
If I were you.

If I were you, I would not be
On short acquaintance quite so free;
Nor would I rapturously gush
O'er things that are not worth a rush.
For though my pleasure might be great,
I would not be a rattle-pate,
But let my words be choice and few,
If I were you.

If I were you, I would resolve
In quiet circles to revolve,
Nor spend my days and nights, dear girl,
Within the merry maddening whirl
Where giddy Fashion leads the way,
And all is dazzle and display.
I would not such a life pursue,
If I were you.

If I were you, my heart I'd hold
Above the price of sordid gold;
Nor be in haste with it to part
To any one in Cupid's mart.
A wise and gracious life I'd lead,
The counsels of my elders heed,
Beginning now the year is new.
If I were you.

MISSENT.

BY ELIZABETH CAMPBELL.

It was the night before Christmas. It had snowed during the day; the snow had then turned to rain, and the rain to hail as the afternoon grew colder; and now as the night grew still colder and colder it seemed likely to settle down for a heavy snowstorm.

"A nasty night," thought old Captain Warren; "a night on which I would scarcely turn my enemy's dog from my door," and just at that moment a loud knock sounded on the door panel, and Margery Warren, the captain's pretty daughter and only child, started up with a cry.

"What's the matter, my girl? Surely there's nothing so frightful in a knock at the door except to the unfortunate wayfarer, whoever it may chance to be. Bestir yourself, Margery, child; don't let any one knock a second time on such a night."

Thus adjured, Margery hastened to open the door; and with the opening of it rushed in a volume of wind, and hail, and snow that almost blew out the lamp on the table. A man, wrapped in a long Spanish-looking cloak, his face almost wholly concealed by the wide-brimmed felt hat that he wore pulled down over his face, stood on the threshold. Before he had time even to crave admittance, Captain Warren, with the hearty hospitality for which every one knew him to be remarkable, bade him enter.

"Come in, come in, whoever you may be, sir," he called out, in a jovial voice. "If you were Old Nick himself I would scarcely refuse you a shelter to-night."

The stranger entered, removing his hat and cloak, and shaking the weather-drops from them as he did so, and revealed a figure of unusual elegance and a dark Spanish face, with deep, glowing black eyes that found their way in one swift look to the bottom of sweet Margery Warren's heart.

Although he had a foreign appearance, he spoke English with ease and fluency. It was, indeed, as Captain Warren learned from the stranger in the course of the evening, his mother-tongue. Juan Arrietta was the son of a Spanish father, but his mother had been a fair English girl, and it was from her that he inherited the dash of gold that brightened his dark locks and gave the last touch of fascination to his handsome countenance. He [illegible] from a vessel that had touched at New London that day, he told Captain Warren, intending to go on to Boston; but, being a stranger, he had somehow missed his way and lost his train, and seemed sincerely grateful for Captain Warren's hospitable invitation to spend the night where he was, instead of going forth in the storm again in search of an inn.

The next day was Christmas, and it would have seemed a breach of good manners on the part of Captain Warren not to have invited his accidental guest to take his Christmas dinner with himself and daughter. So the young man stayed, and after that he stayed on from day to day, till Captain Warren began to wonder why his journey to Boston was so long delayed.

One day an acquaintance of the captain asked him, in a jesting tone, when the wedding was to take place; and then he learned that it was already spoken of as an understood affair that Margery Warren and the handsome stranger—who might have dropped from the clouds on Christmas Eve, for aught that New London knew to the contrary—were to pair off in bonds of wedlock with each other.

The captain was startled and troubled, and determined to talk to the young people that very night, and have the matter settled at once. And he did so.

The girl admitted at once that her heart was gone, but added that she was happy enough in the knowledge of having a better one given to her in exchange. And why had he not been told? When was the marriage to be?

"Ah, father, Juan will talk with you about that. He is all that is good and noble; but there are difficulties—his family—"

"His family?" interrupted Captain Warren, with a dark, angry flush that seldom stained his clear, bronzed cheek; for he was a gentle-tempered man; "and who and what are his family? If they were Castilian nobles my girl would do them an honor in marrying their son."

Then Margery kissed away the hot, angry flush, and soothed her father's seldom ruffled temper, and Captain Warren consented to wait until Juan should talk with him on the subject.

He did wait, day by day, and found his patience sorely tried. At last he got tired of waiting and spoke to the young man, and as the result of that conversation Captain Warren requested Juan Arrietta to quit his house and to drop forever all further acquaintance with his daughter. Just what passed between them the captain never told Margery; but the dark flush upon his face was deeper and angrier than it had ever been before. He kissed his daughter with more than his usual tenderness, but he hardened his heart against her pleading eyes and her pale, beseeching looks.

"No, my child," he said, "you must forget this stranger. My daughter shall never enter a family where she will be looked on as an interloper, nor waste the youth and sunshine of her life waiting for a husband who may never be in a position to claim her. The man is not a gentleman—no man of honor—to steal away the virgin love of a young girl's heart with nothing more than hopes and expectations to offer her. Forget him, Margery, and despise him, too, as I do. He is only worthy of contempt."

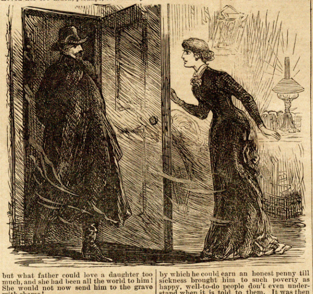
At these words Margery uttered an exceeding bitter cry and tried to throw her arms about her father's neck and to coax him into a more yielding mood. But he repulsed her firmly, and that night Juan Arrietta left the house which he had entered as a thief in the night to carry away its dearest treasure.

Of the three, poor Captain Warren suffered most from the step which his sense of honor and duty forced upon him, and no sleep visited his eyes that night. In the morning he began to fear that he might have been too hard with the child he so fondly loved. Perhaps it would have been better to permit the long engagement for which the young man had pleaded; his parents might, in time, have permitted his marriage with the girl of his heart, though they had destined him for a wealthy heiress in his own rank in life; and Margery's heart might break in the separation he had so sternly enforced. If the two young people had appeared before him then, it is probable he would have agreed to anything they chose to propose.

He longed yet dreaded to meet Margery's pale face and tear-wet eyes. How late she was, too! Other mornings she had been at the table to pour out her father's coffee at least an hour before this. He sat down to the dreary table alone; but he couldn't eat a mouthful. The coffee seemed muddy and tasteless, and the place eloquent of the lack of Margery's presence. Unable to bear the loneliness of it any longer, he summoned the little maid-of-all-work who attended on their slight wants, and sent her to call his daughter.

The girl returned with a face blanched by terror to say that her young mistress was not in the house; and, by the look of her room, she had not been in it all night.

A thunderbolt falling from out the clear sky at his feet could not have caused such terror or surprise as these words brought to Captain Warren. He understood the worst at once. She was gone forever—his daughter had left him—and the world was a blank. He waited all day for some message from her, only a line; perhaps the blow might not prove so utterly crushing as it seemed at first. She had fled with Arrietta, that was plain; but she was a good girl, a brave girl, and a virtuous girl. It could not be that she would bring disgrace and dishonor on the gray hairs of the fond old man who loved even her faults better than the goodness of others. Loved her too much, perhaps, too blindly—



but what father could love a daughter too much, and she had been all the world to him! She would not now send him to the grave with shame!

A letter announcing her marriage would come on the next day, perhaps; and when the next passed, Captain Warren still hoped it would come on the next. What mattered the delay of a day or two in the coming of a letter? It *must* come. He *knew* it would come.

Day followed day—five had passed away, and no word came from Margery Warren. Then, unable to bear the looks of insolent curiosity of his neighbors, or a contemptuous pity still harder to endure, Captain Warren closed up his little cottage, sent Hester, the maid, home to her mother in the village, and joined an expedition to the furthest corner of the world—hoping, in his heart, that he might never live to return.

Three years, all but a few months, had passed away, and it was Christmas Eve again.

In the little cottage at New London a solitary lamp burned in the lonely sitting-room, and a bright fire glowed in the grate; and at the table, his head leaning on his hand, while his faded eyes gazed into the fire, sat Captain Warren. In the kitchen Hester—a muscular young woman of one-and-twenty now—and her mother were making things cheerful, and getting ready a supper calculated to call up an appetite on the part of any human being possessed of a stomach.

"Just three years ago to-night!" mused the poor old captain, who looked sadly worn and broken down. His gray hair was white as snow now, and each wrinkle that had been but a line was now a furrow. "Oh, Margery! Margery! my lass! have I been cruel to you when I meant for the best? Did I drive you from me to shame and misfortune, perhaps to death, when I would have fain kept you from even the thought of harm?"

The idea was never long absent from the father's mind. It had been with him in every corner of the world, and it had brought him home again with an unutterable longing for the place where Margery had been brought up, and where—who could tell?—some news of her might have come during his absence.

Great tears came to his eyes, blotting out the pictures that fancy traced in the blazing fire, and as the bitter drops rained down his weather-beaten cheeks, mighty sobs shook the grief-stricken father, and covering his face with his hands, he wept bitterly.

It was at that moment that a wild, white face looked in upon him, and a cry of love and despair came to his ears.

"Father! father! forgive me! Take me back! Father!—oh, my father!—forgive me, and love me once again!"

He knew the voice. He had reached the door and opened it before the sound had died away, and there on the threshold, in the snow, lay Margery—dead, as it seemed, for the snow upon her face and hands was scarcely whiter or colder than herself. But something within her arms, and clasped close to her heart, its fair, sweet face pressed to hers, asserted immediate and most welcome claims to attention.

"Is 'oo g'anpa? Oh! Ise so g'ad! Poor mamma so ti'ed!"

Captain Warren gathered daughter and child up in his arms together, and his warm tears and kisses raining down on Margery's face called back a little warmth to the almost frozen cheek and lips.

Hester and her mother took charge of the child—a lovely little girl, not quite two years old; but Captain Warren would scarce allow any eyes but his own to look at Margery, or any hands but his own to touch her.

They got her to bed at last, covered in softest blankets, after having forced a few drops of stimulant and nourishment between her lips; and then they watched her while she slept the sleep of utter exhaustion. At first it seemed more than likely it would be the sleep of death; but slowly a faint color came to her pale cheek, and the flickering pulse grew strong and steady.

"Let her sleep, sir," whispered Hester; "this sleep will save her life."

"God bless you, my good girl, for saying so," murmured the captain as he rocked his little granddaughter gently in his arms.

The child slept like an angel, her cheek pillowed on his breast, and one little hand caressing his neck while the other was buried in his bushy whiskers.

"The darling! the angel! And she said her name was Charlotte," murmured her grandfather, whose name was Charles; "she was named for me—my sweet Margery!"

Hour after hour Captain Warren watched beside his daughter, while he gently rocked her child.

Once Hester stole in for a moment, near morning, and placed a letter in his hand.

"Mother has been keeping it for you, sir, ever since you went away," she said. "The postmaster gave it to her care next day, but we never knew where to send it."

Captain Warren looked at the letter, and began to tremble. The address was in Margery's hand, and it was dated on the next day after her flight—across the envelope was printed the word—"Missent."

He placed the child gently beside its mother and opened the letter.

"Darling father," it ran, "forgive me. We were married this morning in Boston. I inclose a copy of my marriage certificate, and the clergyman is an old friend of yours. Pray don't be angry with me. I could not give up my husband, and he was afraid to speak further on the subject to you. But now that we are really married I know you will forgive us both. Write to us at the address inclosed."

"O, my girl! my poor girl! it is for you to forgive," murmured Captain Warren. "What she must have suffered!"

But Margery's sufferings were over, not in death, for she lived to be happy daughter, and wife, and mother. She had had a bitter lesson, but it lasted her all her life.

Juan Arrietta had been false in only one particular. His castles and his noble family, like his ancestry, were Spanish, and remained in Spain. He was a penniless adventurer, but too vain to own the truth when Captain Warren spoke to him. But he loved Margery truly, and had been a good, true husband, and had worked at anything and everything by which he could earn an honest penny till sickness brought him to such poverty as happy, well-to-do people don't even understand when it is told to them. It was then that Margery, with her child, set out on foot in the dead of winter to win her father's forgiveness or die at his feet.

She did, indeed, nearly die; but forgiveness unasked had been waiting long enough in that lonely, broken heart.

Christmas morning—happy Christmas—merry Christmas, though Margery was still too ill to rise from bed, and poor Juan lay ill in the hospital miles and miles away, but the friendly wires bore him this happy message: "Come! Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!"

SCIENCE.

The volcanic dust theory of the red sunsets finds support in Gilbert White's famous Natural History of Selborne, written in England a century ago. In Letter CIX. in that interesting volume the author says that the summer of the year 1783 was an amazing and portentous one, full of horrible phenomena, among which he mentions "the peculiar haze or smoky fog that prevailed for many weeks in this island, and in every part of Europe and even beyond its limits." This, he says, was a most extraordinary appearance, unlike anything known within the memory of man. It lasted from June 23 to July 20, during which period the wind blew from every quarter. "The sun at noon looked as blank as a clouded moon, and shed a rust-colored ferruginous light on the ground and floors of rooms, but was particularly lurid and blood-colored at rising and setting." All this time, we are told, "Calabria and part of the isle of Sicily were torn and convulsed with earthquakes, and about that juncture a volcano sprung out of the sea on the coast of Norway." We have referred to Mr. G. F. Rodwell's book on Mount Etna in confirmation of these statements, and find this sentence: "At the commencement of the great Calabrian earthquake of 1783, Etna ejected large quantities of smoke but was otherwise quiescent."

The French Government steamer *Talisman* made a voyage of scientific exploration last summer in the East Atlantic, along the coasts of Spain, Morocco, the Sahara, and Senegambia, and also among the Canaries, the Azores, and the Cape Verde Islands. The main purpose of the expedition was to procure specimens of animal life from the deep sea and sea bottoms; and a large and interesting collection was dredged up. Many new forms of mollusks, crustaceans, corals and sponges were obtained; and Professor J. Gwyn Jeffreys, who has had an opportunity of seeing the collection, says it comprises a large number of highly and brightly colored animals brought up from the greatest depths. Some of these have large eyes and some have no eyes at all or are blind. Professor Alphonse Milne Edwards, who had charge of the scientific work of the expedition, has submitted a preliminary report to the Paris Academy of Sciences. The small shells are to be studied and classified by a French nobleman, the Marquis de Folin.

In reference to the supposition that the horns shed by deer are eaten by other deer which find them, Sir J. Fayrer writes to *Nature* that it would be a very natural habit, for the animals would find in the lime salts of the horn an element of nutriment which they need. He quotes a letter from a gentleman in Scotland who mentions a cow in the parish of Lairg that eats all the bones she can find, even very large ones, such as shank bones and ribs, and will go miles in search of them. It would be interesting to notice whether a like taste on the part of cows has ever been noticed in this country.

An analysis by Mr. C. W. Heaton, an English chemist, of a sample of water from Hagar's Well, at Mecca, shows that the water is extremely foul. In his report he speaks of its "fearful character." This well is that to which thousands of Mohammedan pilgrims annually resort, and the only wonder is that the water does not kill all those who drink thereof. The pilgrims, most of them, carry away a flask full. They attribute a miraculous influence to the smallest draught of it, and to offer it to a guest is like honoring him by bringing out your best wine. There are the seeds of death indeed, however, in such a cup.

The Society of Apothecaries, in London, has maintained the Chelsea Botanic Garden for the benefit of students in medicine, about two hundred years. The present curator is Mr. Thomas Moore, who is described by the *Garden* newspaper as a skillful botanist, and one of the first authorities in England in pteridology, or the science of ferns (from the Greek, *pteris*, a fern, and *logos*, discourse). Mr. Moore has made the collection more useful and available for study than it ever was before.

From the latest report of the Botanic Garden Board of that colony it appears that hops have been successfully grown in some parts of New Zealand, and are likely to succeed in many districts; but the supply of suitable wood sufficiently durable for hop-poles is inadequate, and the cultivation of the eucalyptus, oak, ash and birch is recommended for the purpose.

Professor Owen, the eminent palæontologist, has been made a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath, and will henceforth be known as Sir Richard Owen, K. C. B. This recognition of his service in the advancement of knowledge is well deserved, but should hardly have been delayed until the distinguished recipient of the honor was eighty years of age.

A winter visit to the new weather observatory on the summit of Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in Scotland, revealed at first approach nothing but two small dark-looking stumps rising above the surrounding snow-flat. The cabin was buried in snow up to the very roof. The building is heated by an American stove, upon which, also, all the cooking is done.

The department of palæontology in the National Museum at Washington will hereafter be under the care of Professor E. D. Cope, of Philadelphia, whose researches concerning American fossils are well known to zoologists. His own collections are also to go to Washington.

Professor Sophus Tromholt, who has devoted much time and attention to the study of auroral phenomena in Sweden and Norway, has gone to Iceland to pursue his investigation of the Northern Light in that country, where gorgeous displays of the aurora in winter are very frequent.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Pansy writes: "About two years ago I corresponded with a young gentleman of my acquaintance. He wrote in a friendly way for some time, then he declared his love for me, and asked for my love in return. I did not think he was in earnest, so I answered in a friendly way, neither admitting nor denying that I loved him. I answered in that way for some time, till I was obliged to be more plain; so I told him frankly, that although I thought a great deal of him, I was afraid we could never be more than *friends*, on account of the difference in our religion, as our parents would never consent, etc. He took my answer as a denial of all hope, seemed to be much disappointed, but thanked me for my frankness, and ended by saying: 'Though disappointment be our doom, 'tis better now than later on.' I wrote to him several times afterwards again in a friendly way, which he answered, but we have not corresponded now for nearly a year. I heard the other day that he got married. Now, I would like to know whether it would be proper for me to return his letters, and ask him to return mine, or should I destroy them without saying anything about them? And even if the rumor that he was married should be untrue, would it be improper to return his letters all the same or not? Please advise me. And how could I send the letters so that no one might open the package, and read them?" You would be justified in writing to your former correspondent, to say that you had heard he was married, and that you were prepared either to destroy his letters, or to return them to him, and that you would like to have returned to you any of yours he may have in his possession. If he wishes you to return the letters he will tell you where to send them. You should wrap them up carefully, tie them, and seal the package. If you send the package by express, and write upon it: "Only to be delivered to the person to whom addressed, or to some one formally authorized to sign a receipt for him," your directions will be strictly observed by the express agent at the place of delivery. If the young man should still be free, and again makes you an offer of his affections, do not say "no," when you more than half mean "yes."

Baritone (Toronto) writes: "1st. Will you please tell me what proper instruction in vocal music will cost per year in Milan or Florence, Italy. 2nd. About what it will cost to live there per year, for one who is willing to live as cheaply as possible, but respectably. 3rd. Can one, having a fair knowledge of the Italian language, and considerable vocal training (such as can be had here), with hard practice, finish there in four years or less? 4th. Is there an institution in Italy similar to the Royal Academy of Music in London, England, (I think that is the name,) where one who has limited means can obtain a thorough training for considerably less money? If so, where it is, and about what it will cost, and if one can enter it without outside influence, and upon entering, are there any conditions connected with it? 5th. Have you any idea what a wardrobe would cost in Europe, such as a tenor or baritone would require when prepared for grand opera?" 1. It would be impossible to tell you what instruction in singing would cost you, so much would depend upon the masters with whom you studied, the interest they took in you, and the time you required from them. 2. At first you would not find that you could live in Milan or Florence at all more cheaply than at home. After you had learned the ways of living and managing, you could live for about two-thirds the amount it would cost you to live in the same way in America. 3. Many great operatic singers have never enjoyed as much as four years regular training in their lives. If you have the natural ability to succeed as a singer, four years of steady study should fit you for the stage. 4. There is a Conservatory of Music at Milan, but it has not the high reputation of those of Paris, Leipsic, and many other places. In all of these institutions a pupil of promise, who passes the examinations satisfactorily, can obtain instruction for small fees, with no other introductions than those which the American or British consul can give him.

School-Girl writes: "I claim that in writing a letter the name of the person to whom it is written should be on the third line, at the left-hand side, while my sister claims that it should be on the second line, at the right-hand side. Please state which is right. Also tell whether or not it is proper for a lady to see a gentleman to the door, when the door opens into the room they are sitting in?" 1. Business letters are usually written upon paper having an engraved or printed heading and space for the date. The name of the person to whom such a letter is addressed is written at the left-hand side of the first line below the heading, unless the letter is to be very short, in which case a line or two is often left blank, in order to bring the letter into the middle of the sheet. Letters of friendship are usually begun by writing on the left-hand side, a little below the date, the name, or name and title, by which the writer is accustomed to address the person written to, with the words "Dear" or "My dear" prefixed; and a great many write the full name and title at the end of the letter, below and a little to the left of their own signature. 2. When the door of the house opens directly into the sitting-room, or is so situated as to be in full view of those in the sitting-room, it would be awkward not to accompany your guest towards the door. Such matters are regulated by sense and taste, and not by fixed rules.

Dolly (Newark) writes: "1. Is it proper for a gentleman to take a lady's arm, or should he ask her to take his? 2. Should a young gentleman shake hands with a young lady when first introduced to her? 3. How old do you think a young lady should be before going out with a young gentleman, or having one see her home from a friend's house, or a meeting of young folks of any kind? I do not mean to keep company. 4. What day of the week did August the 5th, 1867, fall on? 5. Is it proper for a young lady to receive a young gentleman's picture, they being only friends?" 1. A gentleman should never take a lady's arm, except to afford her momentary needed assistance on proper occasions; when walking together at night, a gentleman should offer a lady his arm. 2. No. Not unless the young lady extends her hand. 3. When young ladies are old enough to go out unattended to social gatherings, they are old enough to accept a proper escort home. The time when it is proper for a girl to go much into society varies in different cases. It is much better for most girls to give the greater part of their attention to their studies, until they are at least seventeen or eighteen. 4. August 5th, 1867, fell on Monday. 5. If a gentleman offers you his photograph you need not hurt his feelings by refusing it, but you should not give yours in return, except to old and intimate friends.

A. S. F. (Washington, D. C.) writes: "We intended to have our office painted. We desired to have it painted white, when a third party disputed as to having it white, saying there was no such color as white. So the dispute arose, and we spoke of it to other parties. Some say, as to painting, it is a color; others say not. Please decide for us." In strictly scientific and in common language white is a color. A surface which throws all the rays of light on the eye is white; one which absorbs all the rays of light is black; and in this scientific sense, has no color; and a substance, such as air, which allows all the rays to pass through it unchanged, is transparent and invisible. In certain technical senses, however, white is not a color. Artists speak of masses of color, in contradistinction with masses of white, and dressmakers and milliners also exclude white from among the colors. So in this argument, as is often the case, every one is right in one way or other, and it is only necessary to define accurately the sense in which the words are used to bring all into agreement on the subject.

H. J. (Boston) writes: "1. Will you please inform me how I can stain ivory black, also shells? 2. Will you also inform me if working in ammonia is hurtful?" 1. Ivory may be dyed a fine black by boiling it for some time in a filtered decoction of logwood, and then steeping it in a solution of the red acetate or the red sulphate of iron. After your shells are thoroughly cleaned and polished, steep them in a neutral solution of nitrate of silver, made by dissolving the crystals of nitrate of silver in water, and let the light have free access during the process. We cannot promise very good results from this method; shells are more often engraved and the sunk portions filled with black enamel or cement, than stained. 2. Working in ammonia is not unwholesome, unless the fumes are so strong as to cause immediate distress. There is no danger of poisoning, as is the case when working in lead or mercury.

L. C. T. (Tennessee) writes: "Will you please state whose make the most popular clocks for general use are? I want to have clocks sold extensively through the country, and want name and address of some leading clock manufactury." You should know that the *Ledger* is not likely to discriminate against the numerous manufacturers of American clocks, by naming one as more popular than his rivals. You must use your judgment in deciding on what class of clocks is likely to meet the wants of those whom you expect to be your customers, and if you have no ideas of your own on this subject, it is not likely that you will make a success of the business. Consult the trade journals for names and addresses, but remember that they are advertising mediums, and that most of them are paid, directly or indirectly, for nearly every opinion expressed in their columns.

Steady Reader (New Bedford) writes: "Where can I get the rising and setting of the sun and moon for the year 1885, according to the new standard time?" We do not suppose that any table of the hours of sunset and sunrise for the exact latitude of New Bedford, for the year 1885, has yet been published, but you can ascertain the time closely enough for practical purposes by taking an almanac for last year, calculated for Boston, using Boston local time, and subtracting from each hour the difference between New Bedford true local time and the new railway time. If you want to find the hour of sunrise and sunset with perfect accuracy, you must calculate the true local time for yourself from the data furnished by the United States Nautical Almanac for 1855, and then, knowing the exact longitude of New Bedford, you can turn these local times into railway time.

S. K. writes: "What is the German word for the fish, *Pike*?" The German word for the common English pike or pickerel, *esox lucius*, is *Der Hecht*. This fish is not found in America, but the name, pike, is very properly applied to several members of the same genus *esox*, some of which resemble their European relative, *Der Hecht*, so closely, that many naturalists have considered the two species to be identical; many other fish, such as the wall-eyed pike of the Great Lakes and of the St. Lawrence, and the garpike, are called pikes in some parts of the country, although they are quite unlike the orginal owner of the name.

H. H. (Chicago) writes: "I am desirous of becoming a detective. I may be entirely mistaken, but I think I possess the qualities by which a person may become a *good* detective. How can I find out how to get into a secret service, or where the desired information can be obtained?" In most cities the detective force is under the same management as the ordinary police force, and to obtain a place upon it you must bring to bear whatever political influences you can command to secure an appointment.

Jenny (Washington) writes: "There is a matter that I would like your advice upon. A young man, who is a clerk in one of the Government offices in this city, has boarded at our house for over two years. When he first came I was only sixteen years old, and had just graduated at the —— Seminary. We soon began to like one another, and after we had been acquainted six months he asked me to be his wife. I consented, with my mother's approval. My father has been dead for over eight years. The young gentleman, whom I will call Harry, told us that his father was a rich farmer, and his uncle a wealthy banker. He often said that he was an only child, and would have all his father's wealth, and would also be the heir of his uncle, who was an old bachelor and liked him (Harry) better than anybody else in the world. We were to have been married when I became eighteen, and that was last November. But as the time approached, my lover began to hint that he could not be ready at the day set. He said he wanted his parents and his uncle to attend the wedding, and that they could not leave home then. He professed to have written urgent letters to them about it, but could not induce them to come on. He said they promised to come during the holydays, and so our wedding-day was set for the twenty-seventh of December. But as that day approached Harry began to express fears that his parents could not come on, because his mother had caught a severe cold, which had settled on her lungs, and the doctor thought it would be unsafe for her to travel from Ohio, where they live, to Washington. My mother began to suspect that something was wrong, and wrote to Harry's father, stating the case, and cordially inviting him and Harry's mother and uncle to come to the wedding. She soon got a reply from the mother, saying she was not ill, and had not been out of health for years, and that she was greatly surprised at my mother's letter, for Harry had been engaged for more than three years to his cousin—her niece. I was overwhelmed when I saw this letter, and could not believe it was true. But when my mother showed it to Harry he confessed that it was true, and said that now we knew the real reason why he had postponed the wedding. He was afraid his cousin, whom he does not love, although he allowed himself to become engaged to her when he was only twenty years old—he is now twenty-three—would sue him for breach of promise, if he married me. He said he had tried to get her to release him from the engagement, but she wouldn't do it. Mother got a friend to inquire about his family, and it turns out that all he said about them is true. I love him dearly, and he says he would rather die than give me up. But mother, and her brother, who is a lawyer, want me to break the engagement, and let Harry go. I cannot do that, and *do not know what to do*. So I want your advice. Please oblige by giving it to me at once." As the young man deceived you so often as to the postponement of the marriage and his engagement to his cousin, you ought to be cautious about believing any promises he makes. Your mother and your uncle can doubtless give you better advice than we, or any stranger, can.

Sailor (Portsmouth, N. H.) writes: "Two years ago a shipping house in New York got me to ship as a sailor on one of their vessels bound for China. They deceived me as to the work I would have to do—I had never been to sea—and the treatment I would receive. As soon as we got out to sea, the captain and his mate began to abuse all of us common sailors. We had to work like slaves, and our food was so unwholesome that several of us got sick. I was one of the sickest, but before I had got well I was made to work very hard. The voyage held on beyond the time set for it. From Shanghai the vessel went to Ceylon and it was almost two years before it got back to New York. By that time my health was ruined, and I came home to Portsmouth to die, as I thought. But I am getting better, and feel as though I should like to make those shipping merchants pay me for what I have suffered through the lying stories they told me in order to get me to ship on their vessel. Couldn't they be made to pay me for my loss of health, as I shall never be really well again?" It is not likely that you could recover anything of the shipping merchants to whom you refer, on account of what you consider their false representations, and your consequent suffering and loss of health. They could keep the case in court for years, and when it should come to trial the chances would be that you could not prove enough to make them liable for either your ill-treatment or the damage to your health.

D. J. M. (Nyack, N. Y.) writes: "What is the meaning of 'speculating on a margin?' Also, of 'selling short' and 'going long' on stocks? And do you think it would be safe for me to invest money in any of the railroad stocks at this time? I have a small fortune, which is now invested in Government bonds, and am advised that I could treble my income by selling out the bonds and putting the proceeds in some of the regular dividend-paying stocks. Do you think it would be prudent for me to do so?" No. On the contrary, we think it would be very imprudent for you to do so. Hundreds of persons have from time immemorial been reduced from comparative wealth to poverty by trying to "treble" their incomes in the way you mention. People "speculate on a margin," in Wall street, when they buy stocks and pay only a part of their cost—usually from ten to twenty-five per cent. of it; or when, if they sell, they deposit a similar per centage of the price with the broker for the purpose of protecting him against loss in case the price should decline. "Selling short" is selling stock when the seller has none of the stock which he sells. "Going long" is buying stock and holding it for a rise in the price. It is in "selling short" and "going long" that speculators resort to "margins," as it enables them to deal in larger amounts of stock than they could handle if they had to pay over the full value at once.

Harry writes: "Suppose I have an engagement with a young lady to go sleigh-riding on a certain day, but, owing to the detention of a railroad train, am four hours behind time, and on going to her residence with my turnout, find that she has gone riding with some one else. Ought I to feel hurt, or not? That is exactly what happened a few days ago. When I called for the young lady, her aunt told me that she waited for me a long time, and finally gave me up. I told the aunt why I had been delayed, and left my regrets for the young lady. I have not been to see her since, nor have I heard from her. I supposed that, when she learned the facts, she would send me a note expressing her regrets at the unfortunate delay, or at missing my call, or something of the kind. If she does not do so, ought I to call and state the case to her in person, or let the matter pass without further notice?" If you care much for the young lady, it would be discreet for you to call on her. But if your acquaintance is merely a society affair, you can afford to let the matter rest till you meet her, and then talk it over in a good-natured way. You had no reason to expect a note expressing regret from her.

C. L. M. (Canandaigua, N. Y.) writes: "Can you suggest some way by which I can overcome a habit of stammering? I have been subject to it from childhood, and it sometimes annoys me so much as to make life burdensome. If you will tell me of some remedy I will be very much obliged." It has been found that if a person afflicted with stammering will be very slow and careful in enunciating his words, he can gradually overcome the impediment in his speech. In one method of cure, which is said to have been very successful, the stammerer is made to mark the time in his speech, just as it is ordinarily done in singing. At first he is to beat on every syllable. He begins by reading one of the Psalms, striking the finger on the knee at every word. Time can be marked by striking the finger on the knee, by hitting the thumb against the forefinger, or by moving the foot gently up and down. It is said that the worst case of stuttering can be cured if the victim will read an hour every day in this manner, and observe the same rules as nearly as possible in his conversation.

J. C. S. (Columbus, Ohio) writes: "Can you tell me who was the inventor of short-hand writing? One of my school-mates says that his grandfather invented it, and made a good deal of money out of it. But I have read that it was invented by a Frenchman. I should be much obliged if you would give me the inventor's name, and tell me when he made the invention." There have been thousands of systems of short-hand writing, and your school-mate's grandfather may have invented one of them. Frenchmen, Germans, Italians, Spaniards, Britons and Americans have invented many systems. And so did the Greeks and Romans. In fact, the art of short-hand writing is more than two thousand years old. Like so many other things, it has been a matter of growth and development, and nobody can positively tell who first invented it.

A Lover of Fun writes: "Can you give me the exact words of the epigram about an Irishman and a Yankee who, in riding past a gallows, tried their wit on each other? I should be obliged if you would give it in your next number, as I want to use it in a debate in our society in which I am to take part." The sparkling wit of Irishmen and the dry humor of Yankees have been worked up into various epigrams of the kind you mention, one of the most noted of which is as follows:

As Pat, an odd joker, and Yankee more sly,
Riding together, a gibbet passed by;
Said the Yankee to Pat, "If I don't make too free,
Give that gallows its due, and pray where would *you* be?"
"Why, honey," said Pat, "faith, that's aisily known—
I'd be riding to town *by myself all alone!*"

Correll (Ohio) writes: "Will you tell me how many of the old forts there are yet standing that were used in our civil war, and their names?" It would be impossible to give an accurate answer to your question. The lines of all the vast field works about Washington, Vicksburg, Nashville, Petersburg and Richmond are still plainly to be traced, and every field of operations is marked by the lines of more or less temporary defenses. If you wanted the list of military posts still in use, about which operations were carried on during the war, you might take almost the whole lists of posts in the Southern States, few new ones having been established since the ending of the civil war.

Josephus writes: "I am a Jew, and have had a discussion with a Russian about my race. He says that no Jew ever showed any military genius, and I claim that Marshal Ney and Marshal Massena, two of Napoleon's most celebrated commanders, were Jews. My grandfather knew both of those great marshals, and often told my mother that they were Jews. Am I not right in claiming them as members of my race?" That is a disputed point, and the weight of evidence is decidedly against you. Why don't you base your claim on facts which are indisputable? Joshua, David, Judas Maccabeus, and other old warriors of renown, were Jews beyond all question, and by taking your stand on them you could easily silence your Russian opponent.

Isabel writes: "What author is it that calls woman Heaven's last best gift to man?" Milton started that idea. In "Paradise Lost" he makes Adam say to the sleeping Eve:

"Awake,
My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight!"

Other authors have used the same idea in different ways, and expressed it in nearly the same language.

⁂ Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.